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Spring • 1949

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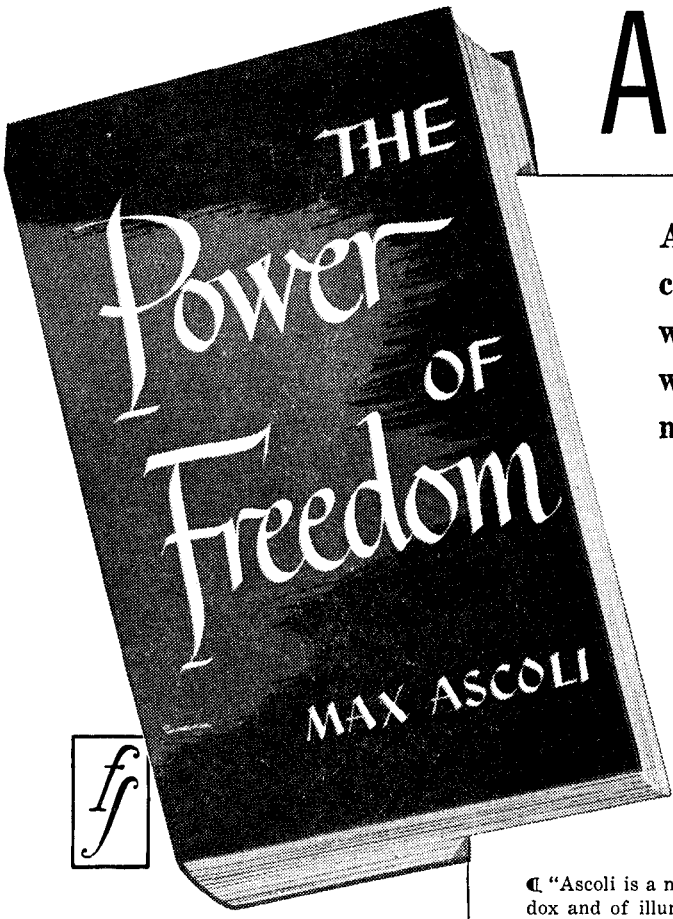

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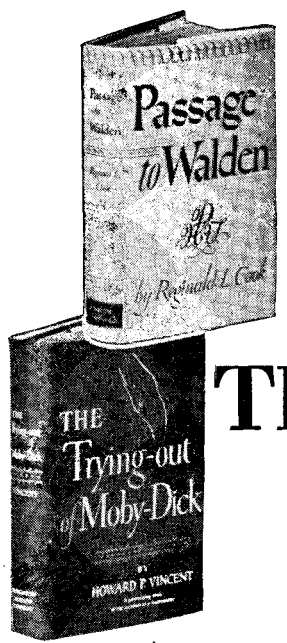

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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American Negro Literature

J. Saunders Redding

THERE IS this about literature by American Negroes—it has uncommon resilience. Three times within this century it has been done nearly to death: once by indifference, once by opposition, and once by the unbounded enthusiasm of its well-meaning friends.

By 1906, Charles W. Chesnutt, the best writer of prose fiction the race had produced, was silent; Paul Laurence Dunbar, the most popular poet, was dead. After these two, at least in the general opinion, there were no other Negro writers. Booker Washington had published *Up from Slavery*, but Washington was no writer—he was the orator and the organizer of the march to a questionable new Canaan. The poetic prose of Du Bois, throbbing in *The Souls of Black Folk*, had not yet found its audience. Polemicists like Monroe Trotter, Kelly, Miller and George Forbes were faint whispers in a lonesome wood. Indifference had stopped the ears of all but the most enlightened who, as often as not, were derisively labeled "nigger lovers."

But this indifference had threatened even before the turn of the century. Dunbar felt it, and the purest stream of his lyricism was made bitter and all but choked by it. Yearning for the recognition of his talent as it expressed itself in the pure English medium, he had to content himself with a kindly, but condescending praise of his

J. SAUNDERS REDDING, professor of English at Hampton Institute, is the author of *To Make a Poet Black* and *No Day of Triumph*. Dr. Redding is now at work on a book for "The Peoples of America" series. His PORTRAIT of W. E. B. Du Bois appeared in the Winter, 1948-49, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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dialect pieces. Time and again he voiced the sense of frustration brought on by the neglect of what he undoubtedly considered his best work. Writing dialect, he told James Weldon Johnson, was "the only way he could get them to listen to him." His literary friend and sponsor, William D. Howells, at that time probably the most influential critic in America, passing over Dunbar's verse in pure English with only a glance, urged him to write "of his own race in its own accents of our English."

During Dunbar's lifetime, his pieces in pure English appeared more or less on sufferance. The very format of the 1901 edition of *Lyrics of the Hearthside*, the book in which most of his non-dialect poetry was published, suggests this. No fancy binding on this book, no handsome paper, no charming, illustrative photographs. *Lyrics of the Hearthside* was the least publicized of all his books of poetry, and four lines from his "The Poet" may tell why.

> He sang of love when earth was young,
> And love itself was in his lays,
> But, ah, the world it turned to praise
> A jingle in a broken tongue.

Enough has been said about the false concepts, the stereotypes which were effective—and to some extent are still effective—in white America's thinking about the Negro for the point not to be labored here. History first, and then years of insidious labor to perpetuate what history had wrought, created these stereotypes. According to them, the Negro was a buffoon, a harmless child of nature, a dangerous despoiler (the concepts were contradictory), an irresponsible beast of devilish cunning—soulless, ambitionless and depraved. The Negro, in short, was a higher species of some creature that was not quite man.

What this has done to writing by American Negroes could easily be imagined, even without the documentation, which is abundant. No important critic of writing by American Negroes has failed to note the influence of the concept upon it. Sterling Brown, one of the more searching scholars in the field, gives it scathing comment in "The Negro Author and His Publisher." James Weldon Johnson touches upon it in his preface to the 1931 edition of his anthology,

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but he does so even more cogently in "The Negro Author's Dilemma." The introduction to Countee Cullen's *Caroling Dusk* is a wry lament over it. In *The New Negro*, Alain Locke expresses the well-founded opinion that the Negro "has been a stock figure perpetuated as an historical fiction partly in innocent sentimentalism, partly in deliberate reactionism."

There can be no question as to the power of the traditional concepts. The Negro writer reacted to them in one of two ways. Either he bowed down to them, writing such stories as would do them no violence; or he went to the opposite extreme and wrote for the purpose of invalidating, or at least denying, the tradition. Dunbar did the former. Excepting only a few, his short stories depict Negro characters as whimsical, simple, folksy, not-too-bright souls, all of whose social problems are little ones, and all of whose emotional cares can be solved by the intellectual or spiritual equivalent of a stick of red peppermint candy. It is of course significant that three of his four novels are not about Negroes at all; and the irony of depicting himself as a white youth in his spiritual autobiography, *The Uncalled*, needs no comment.

Charles Chesnutt's experience is also to the point. When his stories began appearing in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1887, it was not generally known that their author was a Negro. Stories like "The Gray Wolf's Ha'nt" and "The Goophered Grapevine" were so detached and objective that the author's race could not have been detected from a reading of them. The editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Walter H. Page, fearing that public acknowledgment of it would do the author's work harm, was reluctant to admit that Chesnutt was a Negro, and the fact of his race was kept a closely guarded secret for a decade.

It was this same fear that led to the rejection of Chesnutt's first novel, *The House behind the Cedars*, for "a literary work by an American of acknowledged color was a doubtful experiment . . . entirely apart from its intrinsic merit." The reception of Chesnutt's later books—those that came after 1900—was to prove that literary works by an "American of color" were more than doubtful experiments. *The Colonel's Dream* and *The Marrow of Tradition* did not pay the cost of the paper and the printing. They were honest prob-

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ings at the heart of a devilish problem; they were, quite frankly, propaganda. But the thing that made the audience of the day indifferent to them was their attempt to override the concepts that were the props of the dialect tradition. Had Chesnutt not had a reputation as a writer of short stories (which are, anyway, his best work), it is likely that his novels would not have been published at all.

The poetry of Dunbar and the prose of Chesnutt proved that even with the arbitrary limitations imposed upon them by historical convention, Negro writers could rise to heights of artistic expression. They could even circumvent the convention, albeit self-consciously, and create credible white characters in a credible white milieu.

II

After about 1902, indifference began to crystallize into opposition to the culture-conscious, race-conscious Negro seeking honest answers to honest questions. It was opposition to the Negro's democratic ambitions which were just then beginning to burgeon. It was opposition to the Negro who was weary of his role of clown, scapegoat, doormat. And it was, of course, opposition to the Negro writer who was honest and sincere and anxious beyond the bounds of superimposed racial polity.

There is danger here of over-simplifying a long and complex story. Even with the advantage of hindsight, it is hard to tell what is cause and what effect. But let us have a look at some of the more revealing circumstances. In 1902 came Thomas Dixon's *The Leopard's Spots*, and three years later *The Clansman*. They were both tremendously popular. In 1906 there were race riots in Georgia and Texas, in 1908 in Illinois. . . . By this later year, too, practically all of the Southern states had disfranchised the Negro and made color caste legal. . . . The Negro's talent for monkeyshines had been exploited on the stage, and coon songs (some by James Weldon Johnson and his brother!) had attained wide popularity. Meantime, in 1904, Thomas Nelson Page had published the bible of reactionism, *The Negro, the Southerner's Problem*. And, probably most cogent fact of all, Booker Washington had reached the position of undisputed leader of American Negroes by advocating a racial policy strictly in line with the traditional concept.

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There had been a time when the old concept of the Negro had served to ease his burden. He had been laughed at, tolerated, and genially despaired of as hopeless in a modern, dynamic society. White Americans had become used to a myth—had, indeed, convinced themselves that myth was reality. All the instruments of social betterment—schools, churches, lodges—adopted by colored people were the subjects of ribald jokes and derisive laughter. Even the fact that the speeches which Booker Washington was making up and down the country could have been made only by a really intelligent and educated man did not strike them as a contradiction of the concept. And anyway, there was this about Washington: he was at least half-white, and white blood in that proportion excused and accounted for many a thing, including being intelligent, lunching with President Theodore Roosevelt, and getting an honorary degree from Harvard.

Today any objective judgment of Booker Washington's basic notion must be that it was an extension of the old tradition framed in new terms. He preached a message of compromise, of humility, of patience. Under the impact of social change the concept was modified to include the stereotype of the Negro as satisfied peasant, a docile servitor under the stern but kindly eye of the white boss; a creature who had a place, knew it, and would keep it unless he got *bad* notions from somewhere. The merely laughable coon had become also the cheap laborer who could be righteously exploited for his own good and to the greater glory of God. By this addition to the concept, the Negro-white status quo—the condition of inferior-superior caste—could be maintained in the face of profound changes in the general society.

What this meant to the Negro artist and writer was that he must, if he wished an audience, adhere to the old forms and the acceptable patterns. It meant that he must work within the limitations of the concept, or ignore his racial kinship altogether and leave unsounded the profoundest depths of the peculiar experiences which were his by reason of his race. But fewer and fewer Negro writers were content with the limitations. The number of dialect pieces (the term includes the whole tradition) written after 1907 is very small indeed. Among Negro writers the tradition had lost its force and its validity.

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White writers like Julia Peterkin and Gilmore Millen, and, in a different way, Carl Van Vechten and DuBose Heyward, were to lend it a spurious strength down through the 1920's.

Negro writers of unmistakable talent chose the second course, and some of them won high critical praise for their work in non-racial themes. Their leader was William Stanley Braithwaite. Save only a few essays written at the behest of his friend, W.E.B. Du Bois, nothing that came from his pen had anything about it to mark it as Negro. His leading essays in the Boston *Transcript*, his anthologies of magazine verse, and his own poetry, might just as well have been written by someone with no background in the provocative experience of being colored in America.

Though the other Negro poets of this genre (which was not entirely a genre) developed a kind of dilettantist virtuosity, none carried it to Braithwaite's amazing lengths of self-conscious contrivance. They were simpler and more conventional in their apostasy. Alice Dunbar, the widow of Paul, wrote sonnets of uncommon skill and beauty. Georgia Johnson and Anne Spenser were at home in the formal lyric, and James Weldon Johnson in "The White Witch" and "My City" set a very high standard for his fellow contributors to the *Century Magazine*.

But given the whole web of circumstance—empirical, historic, racial, psychological—these poets must have realized that they could not go on in this fashion. With a full tide of race-consciousness bearing in upon them individually and as a group, they could not go on forever denying their racehood. To try to do this at all was symptomatic of neurotic strain. They could not go on, and they did not. The hardiest of them turned to expression of another kind the moment the pressure was off.

The pressure was not off for another decade and a half. As a matter of fact, it mounted steadily. For all of Booker Washington's popularity and ideological appeal among whites, who had set him up as *the* leader of the Negro race, and for all of his power, there was rebellion against him in the forward ranks of Negroes. Rebellion against Washington meant dissatisfaction with the social and economic goals which he had persuaded white Americans were the proper goals for the Negro race. The whites had not counted on this

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disaffection, and their reaction to it was willful, blind opposition.

What had happened was that Booker Washington, with the help of the historic situation and the old concept, had so thoroughly captured the minds of most of those white people who were kindly disposed to Negroes that not another Negro had a chance to be heard. Negro schools needing help could get it from rich and powerful whites only through Booker Washington. Negro social thought wanting a sounding board could have it only with the sanction of the Principal of Tuskegee. Negro politicians were helpless without his endorsement. Negro seekers after jobs of any consequence in either public or private capacities begged recommendations from Booker Washington.

This despotic power—and there is scarcely another term for it—was stultifying to many intelligent Negroes, especially in the North. White editors, who would have published anything under the signature of Booker Washington, consistently rejected all but the most innocuous work of other Negroes. Publishers were not interested in the ideas of Negroes unless those ideas conformed to Washington's, or in creative work by and about Negroes unless they fell into the old pattern.

So intelligent, articulate Negroes grew insurgent, and the leader of this insurgence was W. E. B. Du Bois. Nor was his the only voice raised in protest. Charles Chesnutt spoke out, and so did John Hope and Kelly Miller. In 1900 the *Chicago Defender* had been founded, and in 1901 Monroe Trotter's *Boston Guardian*. Courageous as these polemical organs were, they had not yet grown into full effectiveness. Neither had Du Bois, but he was growing fast. By 1903 the Atlanta University Studies of the Negro were coming out regularly under his editorship. In that year he published *The Souls of Black Folk*, which contained the essay "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," sharply critical of the Tuskegee leader. Du Bois was in on the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and in 1910 he became editor of the new monthly, the *Crisis*.

From the very first the *Crisis* was much more than the official organ of the N.A.A.C.P. It was a platform for the expression of all sorts of ideas that ran counter to the notion of Negro inferiority.

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Excepting such liberal and nonpopular journals as the *Atlantic Monthly* and *World's Work* and the two or three Negro newspapers that had not been bought or throttled by the "Tuskegee Machine," the *Crisis* was the only voice the Negro had. The opposition to that voice was organized around the person and the philosophy of Booker Washington, and there were times when this opposition all but drowned out the voice.

Nevertheless protestation and revolt were becoming bit by bit more powerful reagents in the social chemistry that produced the New Negro. Year by year more Negroes were transformed—and a lot of them needed transforming. Once James Weldon Johnson himself had written "coon songs" and been content to carol with sweet humility "Lift Every Voice and Sing." When Johnson wrote it in 1900, it had the approval of Booker Washington and became the "Negro National Anthem." Then followed Johnson's period of apostasy and such jejune pieces as "The Glory of the Day Was in Her Face," among others. But in 1912, when he was already forty-one, he wrote the novel *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, and in 1917 he cried out bitterly that Negroes must cease speaking "servile words" and must "stand erect and without fear."

III

Other factors than simple protest contributed to the generation of the New Negro. In the first place, the notions regarding the Old Negro were based on pure myth. The changes occurring at the onset of war in Europe sloughed off some of the emotional and intellectual accretions, and the Negro stood partially revealed for what he was—a fellow whose opportunities had been narrowed by historical fallacies, "a creature of moral debate," but a man pretty much as other men. The war, which made him an inter-sectional migrant, proved that he, too, sought more economic opportunities, the protection of laws even-handedly administered, the enlargement of democracy. He, too, was a seeker for the realities in the American dream.

But when in 1917 the Negro was called upon to protect that dream with his blood, he revealed himself more fully. He asked questions

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and demanded answers. Whose democracy? he wanted to know; and why, and wherefore? There followed the promises, which were certainly sincerely meant in the stress of the times. Then came the fighting and dying—and, finally, came a thing called Peace. But in 1919 and after, there were the race riots in the nation's capital, in Chicago, in Chester, Pennsylvania, and in East St. Louis.

By this time the New Negro movement was already stirring massively along many fronts. In the 1920's Negroes cracked through the prejudices that had largely confined them to supernumerary roles on Broadway. *Shuffle Along* was praised as "a sparkling, all-Negro musical of unusual zest and talent." Charles Gilpin's portrayal of the Emperor Jones was the dramatic triumph of 1921. The Garvey Movement, fast getting out of bounds, swept the country like a wildfire. James Weldon Johnson published an anthology of Negro verse. The monumental historical studies of the Negro were begun by Carter Woodson. *The Gift of Black Folk*, *Color*, *Fire In the Flint*, *Weary Blues*, *God's Trombones*, *Walls of Jericho*, and *Home to Harlem* had all been published, read, discussed, praised or damned by 1928.

Fortunately some of the talents that produced these works were genuine. Had this not been so, the New Negro movement in art and literature would surely have come to nothing. The best of Johnson, Hughes, Cullen, McKay, Fisher and Du Bois would have lived without the movement, but the movement without them would have gone the way of mah-jongg. Their work considerably furthered the interest of white writers and critics in Negro material and Negro art expression. Whatever else Eugene O'Neill, Paul Rosenfeld and DuBose Heyward did, they gave validity to the new concept of the Negro as material for serious artistic treatment.

Writing by Negroes beginning with this period and continuing into the early thirties had two distinct aspects. The first of these was extremely arty, self-conscious and experimental. Jean Toomer's *Cane* and the "racial-rhythm" and jazz-rhythm poetry of Hughes represent it most notably, while the magazines *Harlem* and *Fire*, which published a quantity of nonsense by writers unheard of since, were its special organs. But the times were themselves arty and ex-

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perimental. That Negro writers could afford to be touched by these influences was a good sign. It was healthy for them to be blown upon by the winds of literary freedom—even of license—that blew upon e. e. cummings, Dos Passos and Hemingway. If their self-conscious experimentation proved nothing lasting, it at least worked no harm.

One searches in vain for a phrase to characterize the exact impulses behind the second aspect, which is the one best remembered. It was chock-full of many contradictory things. It showed itself naïve and sophisticated, hysterical and placid, frivolous and sober, free and enslaved. It is simple enough to attribute this contrariety to the effects of the war; but the atavistic release of certain aberrant tendencies in writing by Negroes in this period cannot be matched in all the rest of contemporary writing. The period produced the poignant beauty of Johnson's *God's Trombones* and the depressing futility of Thurman's *The Blacker the Berry*. Within a span of five years McKay wrote the wholesome *Banjo* and the pointlessly filthy *Banana Bottom*. The Hughes who wrote "I've Known Rivers" and "Mother to Son" could also find creative satisfaction in the bizarre "The Cat and the Saxophone."

The mass mind of white America fastened upon the exotic and the atavistic elements and fashioned them into a fad, the commercialized products of which were manufactured in Harlem. That that Harlem itself was largely synthetic did not seem to matter. It was "nigger heaven." There, the advertised belief was, Dullness was dethroned: Gaiety was king! The rebels from Sauk Center and Winesburg, Main Street and Park Avenue, sought carnival in Harlem. "Life," the burden of the dithyrambics ran, "had surge and sweep there, and blood-pounding savagery."

Commercialism was the bane of the Negro renaissance of the twenties. Jazz music became no longer the uninhibited expression of unlearned music-makers, but a highly sophisticated pattern of musical sounds. The "Charleston" and the "Black Bottom" went down to Broadway and Park Avenue. Losing much of its folk value, the blues became the "torch song" eloquently sung by Ruth Etting and Helen Morgan. Negro material passed into the less sincere hands of white artists, and Negro writers themselves, from a high pitch of creation, fell relatively and pathetically silent.

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IV

When Richard Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children* was published in 1938, only the least aware did not realize that a powerful new pen was employing itself in stern and terrible material; when *Native Son* appeared in 1940, even the least aware realized it. The first book is a clinical study of human minds under the stress of violence; the second is a clinical study of the social being under the cumulative effects of organized repression. The two books complement each other. The theme of both is prejudice, conceptual prejudgment—the effects of this upon the human personality. For Wright deals only incidentally—and for dramatic purposes, and because of the authenticity of empiricism—with *Negro* and *white*. "Bigger Thomas was not black all the time," Wright wrote in "How Bigger Was Born." "He was white, too, and there were literally millions of him, *everywhere*. . . . Certain modern experiences were creating types of personalities whose existence ignored racial and national lines. . . ."

Some critics have said that the wide appeal of Wright's work (it has been translated into a dozen languages) is due to the sensationalism in it, but one can have serious doubts that the sensationalism comes off well in translation. What does come off well is the concept of the primary evil of prejudice. This all peoples would understand, and a delineation of its effects, particular though it be, interests them in the same way and for the same reason that love interests them. *Black Boy*, which does not prove the point, does not deny it either. Even here it may be argued that Wright delineates and skewers home the point that "to live habitually as a superior among inferiors . . . is a temptation and a hubris, inevitably deteriorating."

So Wright is a new kind of writer in the ranks of Negroes. He has extricated himself from the dilemma of writing exclusively for a Negro audience and limiting himself to a glorified and race-proud picture of Negro life, and of writing exclusively for a white audience and being trapped in the old stereotypes and fixed opinions that are bulwarks against honest creation. Negro writers traditionally have been impaled upon one or the other horn of this dilemma, sometimes in spite of their efforts to avoid it. Langston Hughes was sincere when he declared, back in the twenties, that Negro writers cared

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nothing for the pleasure or displeasure of either a white or a colored audience—he was sincere, but mistaken.

A writer writes for an audience. Until recently Negro writers have not believed that the white audience and the colored audience were essentially alike, because, in fact, they have not been essentially alike. They have been kept apart by a wide socio-cultural gulf, by differences of concept, by cultivated fears, ignorance, race- and caste-consciousness. Now that gulf is closing, and Negro writers are finding it easier to appeal to the two audiences without being either false to the one or subservient to the other. Thus Margaret Walker, writing for the two audiences now becoming one, can carry away an important poetry prize with her book *For My People*. No longer fearing the ancient interdiction, Chester Himes in *If He Hollers Let Him Go* and *Lonely Crusade* writes of the sexual attraction a white woman feels for a Negro man. In *Knock On Any Door* Willard Motley can concern himself almost entirely with white characters. On the purely romantic and escapist side, Frank Yerby's *The Foxes of Harrow* sells over a million copies, and *The Vixens* and *The Golden Hawk* over a half-million each. Anthologists no longer think it risky to collect, edit and issue the works of Negro writers.

Facing up to the tremendous challenge of appealing to two audiences, Negro writers are extricating themselves from what has sometimes seemed a terrifying dilemma. Working honestly in the material they know best, they are creating for themselves a new freedom. Though what is happening seems very like a miracle, it has been a long, long time preparing. Writing by American Negroes has never before been in such a splendid state of health, nor had so bright and shining a future before it.

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The Conservative University Press

Henry M. Silver

THE MOST interesting development in the field of university press publishing over the last ten years has been the degree of financial security achieved by the major houses. If the wolf is still outside the door (and for years he was there so consistently that his shadow became permanently etched on the step), he is present largely by invitation and because the publishers direct to unprofitable books the funds which, once fugitive, are today reliable. Financial security does not mean wealth; but the days when meeting the payroll was an adventure are over.

The next most interesting development is the greatly increased professional competence of the university press, and the growth of its publishing program, both being simultaneously cause and effect.

The third, and the subject of this article, is a growing economic conservatism, an increasing disinclination to experiment and to live the heady life of trial by error.

These statements are generalizations. University publishers, like all publishers, vary greatly in aims, policy, size and zeal. In some institutions the press is the tail on the printing-supply dog; in others the reverse is true. All this article attempts is to look at and comment upon a group situation, confident that not all that is said will apply to any one member of that group 100 per cent of the time.

The statement that university presses have achieved a degree of financial security is so contrary to their classic role as publishers that a word of explanation is in order. Do they not exist to publish "the maximum number of good books this side of bankruptcy," to use the words of the director of one of the biggest and best—the implication being not very much this side of bankruptcy.

First of all, a scholarly publisher tends to increase his financial

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strength simply by continuing to exist. Many of his books sell, after the first quiet bulge, slowly but for a long time and at small additional cost. The larger the back list is, the more important it becomes; and while there is a point below which the number of annual sales of any one title cannot drop, without creating a housekeeping loss, this number is small in a rent-free world. During the last five years, an amazing number of sales from the back list were made—a good many of books which had been written off entirely.

Another stabilizing factor has been the successful development by some of the presses of ventures not strictly within the field of specialized publishing—ventures which harried directors created for revenue purposes. Textbooks come in here, as do books of general reference, timely reports of scientific developments, and government contracts.

Still further strength has been given those fortunate presses which in certain institutions operate bookstores. These stores were always a reliable prop; despite the low discount which textbooks carry, selling them is profitable because it is a quantity operation. The rush to the university by the ex-soldier increased such sales greatly; and while the mechanics of billing the G.I. customers were burdensome, the major problem was where to put the customers.

The most unappreciated factor of all is the continuing withdrawal of commercial publishers from the field of general scholarly book publishing. The extent to which this has gone on is made clear in William Miller's forthcoming study of the trade publishers, undertaken for the Public Library Inquiry of the Social Science Research Council. So markedly has the cost of making and selling books gone up that many commercial publishers now speak of breaking even at 10,000 copies of a book sold. This seems too high, even today; publishers are not given to understating their problems, and as a group they are immensely articulate. It is a fact, however, that a good many have been hard hit by the squeeze between high costs and consumer reluctance. The stronger of them have turned to marketing books, rather than publishing them. A concentration on items written to woo the book clubs, for subsequent reprinting by a reprint house (often a subsidiary), and, last and most glorious of all, for purchase by a movie producer (who may have planted the book with the ori-

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ginal publisher in the first place, in a manner similar to that of the reprint periodicals) has left little time and less inclination to bother with even those scholarly books which might be expected to show a small profit.

Although the costs of the university publisher have also risen, they have gone up at a slower rate. An average university press book should break even at 2,700 to 3,000 copies sold (these figures are made deliberately high) unless it contains difficult composition or peculiar binding problems. Between the 3,000 and the 10,000 is a gap into which fit many general books of worthwhile information, and it is the publishing of these books which enhances both the tone of a university publishing list today, and the returns from it. University presses pay no rent; many of them pay lower wages because the advantages of a university environment constitute an ace in the hole when bargaining with the help; and all but a few are located in less populated and lower cost centers than are the commercial publishers.

Of course the break-even point of university publishing has always been lower than that of commercial publishing for these reasons, none of which is particularly new. Twenty years ago, when Donald Bean published the first and (to date) the best of reports on scholarly publishing, this was just as true; the difference is that twenty years ago few university books ever reached the break-even point. That a much larger number now reach it is due not only to the increasing refusal of commercial publishing to bring out the general (and comparatively larger selling) scholarly titles, but also to a greater willingness on the part of the authors of such titles to have a university press undertake them.

More and more do the presses commission books. Twenty years ago this was a rarity. Books then were published after they had already not only been written, but had run the gamut of all other publishers—to arrive at last, exhausted and discouraged, at the university press. The scholarly associations now find themselves in this dubious position: the university presses have become strong enough, and self-confident enough, to take a place in the rejection gauntlet, while making their own arrangements on the side.

An example of what this ultimately means can be found in a comparison of the number of university press books reviewed by the

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New York Times Sunday review section during the first six months of 1938 with those reviewed in the same period of 1948—thirty-three to sixty-three titles respectively. In the earlier period only one press had six titles or more covered; in the latter, five presses. The thirty-three books of 1938 came from twelve presses; those of 1948 from sixteen. Of course only American university presses are here considered.

No doubt about it, the job of selling scholarly books to university audiences is being mastered by university publishers, regardless of what disgruntled authors may say. Authors are always disgruntled; it is an occupational attitude. It is the concensus of ex-university press people who now labor on the windier uplands of commercial publishing that selling-efficiency in an established university press compares favorably with that in houses of risk. This is to speak of the mechanics of day-to-day operation. The littler folk, those who make out review copy distribution lists, promotion pieces, advertising copy, publicity releases, dummies for the salesmen, know their job well enough and can squeeze out whatever blood the turnip contains. Where the policy-makers are concerned, a parochial hangover from the lean and haggard years can often be discerned. It is hard to work for years with little, forced to snuggle up to the authorities who provide the wherewithal with which the deficits are covered, while at the same time pretending that the spring list of monographs and dissertations is hot stuff—hard, I say, to do this without carrying the marks of the campaign. This too is changing, however; the game of internal politics and external tutelage is largely won.

But in the best Toynbeeian fashion, the successful Response to the Challenge has in it a symptom, if not of dissolution, at least of trouble. It is fun to sell books, lots of books. A stock shortage report is one of the pleasantest communications a publisher can see. In the flush of an expanding market, bigness and quantity may come to seem desirable for their own sake, and the duty of publishing that which is highly specialized either go to the wall or be left to other and leaner hands. That man does not live who can compare smaller sales in one year with greater sales the year before and not feel a pang, a twinge, whatever his satisfactions over quality may be. And a further difficulty is that once an organization has been expanded

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to carry on trade sales, more and more trade books must be found to support the organization.

Here is a symptom of a trend, the implications of which the scholar should recognize. The trend contains a good deal which is highly favorable to scholarly publishing, since nothing is more ineffectual than poverty. But it also contains something unfavorable. The scholar might well understand more clearly the real nature of the game. Much of the bickering between scholar and scholarly publisher is based on a mutual misunderstanding of methods. It is literally amazing how few scholars know the facts of a publisher's life. No cliché is more polished than the specialist's remark as he deposits his work on *The Clown in Medieval Scandinavian Drama* on a publisher's desk that "of course every library will need it"; he ignores the basic fact that the number of libraries with decently large funds for accessions is strictly limited.

But lest this be considered one-sided, let it also be said that few publishers have any basic sympathy with the spadework of scholarship. Those eternal footnotes and that laborious bibliographical apparatus represent more than just the remnants of Teutonic tradition; they are the very tools with which scholarship, if it be healthy, maintains rigid checks upon the wellspring of its vigor: truth. At his peril let the scholarly publisher consign the whole mess to oblivion, even though composition charges for notes, index and bibliography average $5.00 a page.

Both parties should address themselves to an understanding of the necessity for a common middle ground. But since it is the publisher who seeks and the scholar who originates, the primary duty of expounding the problem rests with the publisher. This the university presses have consistently avoided. They have been so downright afraid that the authors, and the subsidizers, of their books will learn that they add a manufacturing overhead to their cost sheets and attempt to make from the sale of their books sufficient profit to pay for overhead expenses and to carry some part of their losses, that they have run their business in a fog of double-talk.

Everybody else in the world can set up reserves, write off bad guesses, pay for administrative expense—everybody except the university publisher, who is apparently afraid that other people labor

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under the delusion that he works for love. Some scholars invite this attitude; they seem to think that the publisher enjoys general subsidies he does not have, that manna comes from heaven, or that the ravens will provide. It is time that such scholars were told that markups are necessary to a healthy business, and that without the markup, the organization vanishes. It is also time for the publisher to be less secretive. For scholarly publishing, university press publishing, is being torn by two directly opposing points of view. A solution is at hand, but without a common understanding between the parties, the solution will not be applied.

A short time ago the Secretary of the Modern Language Association sent to the members a statement concerning the result of twenty-two years of book publishing by the Association. An organization which regularly and successfully deposited a learned periodical in the hands of more than 6,000 subscribers somehow had been able to publish during the whole period only one book which had a sale of more than 500 copies. The average sale for all 47 books was 222 copies. All were printed by the letterpress process. Since the number of copies sold compared unfavorably, to put it mildly, with the number left on the shelf, and since the cost of printing the books was of course far more than income from sales, the Secretary felt that a number of questions should be asked. These questions were addressed to 100 senior members of the Association, with the request that the answers be supported by comments.

The first question was. "Shall the Association continue to publish books?" The answers were, "Yes," 89; "No," 8. The next was, "Shall the Association compete with university presses?" Here the replies were, "Yes," 43; "No," 48. The third had to do with pricing; to this a majority of all who answered called for a policy which would break even.

On first examination, these answers lead to complete confusion. If works were published and priced to break even, the retail price per copy would rise by 300 per cent, even assuming the same number of sales; and competition with university presses would certainly cease forthwith. But if such competition were to cease, then why should the Association continue to publish—since the university presses exist, presumably, to operate in this field?

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But before concluding that professors are wholly ignorant of the mechanics of scholarly publishing, the extraordinarily interesting remarks from the letters should be read. Perhaps the professors are not confused at all, but within the rigid framework of this questionnaire, are expressing a certain dissatisfaction with some underlying conventions and assumptions which hold scholarly publishing in a vise.

While university publishers cleave with singular affection to one method of printing, scholarship is divided into two camps concerning scholarly publishing. The one has as its motto the contraception theory, vigorously expressed by so forcible a publisher as Datus Smith of Princeton, but here quoted from G. E. Bentley: "I am much more struck by the vast number of bad books and articles which get published than by the good ones which do not. We have too many avenues of publication open for the number of good manuscripts." The opposing point of view is expounded by Urban T. Holmes: "It is movement, circulation, exchange of ideas that we need to keep our field alive—not a few dozen supposed masterpieces printed at impossible cost every year."

These two remarks, I believe, stake out the problem. Between them lies not merely a striking contradiction, but an immensely different concept of what scholarly publishing represents. Is it exchange of ideas, however unpolished—work in progress? Or is it the presentation of the mature and the considered—work not so much in progress as completed? Or is it both? Suppose Messrs. Bentley and Holmes are both right? There may well be too many monographs masquerading as books, and yet a dearth of studies and reports of work in process. If so, then may it not be possible for the MLA or another organization at once to publish and not to compete, the while breaking even?

Surely this is a twice-told tale, if ever there were one. In 1936 the late Robert Binkley studied the situation at length, and the means of escaping from it. In 1940 Donald Goodchild wrote it all up in a most literate report, which has never had the audience it deserved. But here we are in 1949, with less of a program than ever.

The arts of publishing and the arts of printing are entirely separate. It happens that scholarly publishing is wedded to the letter-

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press process, but that fact is historical, not innate. It further happens that the handsomest books are, on the whole, printed by letterpress; but this is not necessarily publishing. Publishing is simply the writing of something, the setting in train of a method of duplicating it, and the advising of the proper audience of what it contains, where it can be had, and how much it is, if anything. (Allied to this procedure would be some means of getting the work appraised—though this is not essential, merely convenient.) The primary business of the scholarly publisher is publishing, not printing. Printing is the means, not the end. Film is printing; mimeograph is printing; letterpress is printing; offset is printing. But to look at university press publishing is to be struck by the fidelity of these presses to letterpress, even in the most unlikely circumstances. Time and again books are printed by letterpress in editions of 1,500 copies; 400 are sold. Did the publisher not realize this? Yes, but to get a price per copy which would move the book, the fiction of 1,500 copies had to be pursued, the subsidy raised, and the book prnited. As a result, others were not printed, funds having been exhausted.

The scholar is not blameless, least of all the scholar-author. Enormous pressure is brought by him on the university publisher to bring out a "book—I mean a *permanent* book," i.e., a letterpress book. The reviewers are somewhat to blame; it can be demonstrated that even in the specialized media a book with heavy cloth binding enclosing letterpress printing will rate more attention from the reviewers. The competitions of the academic world are certainly not blameless; the well-known compulsion to publish is accompanied by the urge to publish sumptuously. Otherwise how to impress the Dean? The presses are not blameless—the presses perhaps least of all. But there are reasons. Internal pressures brought the university presses, somewhat reluctantly, into the world. Behind the inception of particular ones has often been a patron, a man who loved books. This laudable fact has helped to make the standards of book making in the university press the highest in the country. It is not a coincidence that when the best books of the year are judged, university presses (one in particular) are vigorously represented. The reverse of this picture is that scholarly publishers have over-valued books as ends rather than means, as works of art rather than as tools.

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Let the publishers look again. Metal composition has been stationary for fifty years, but other techniques are coming up fast. The very name given them is a measure of the contempt in which they have been held: near-print. Near-print my eye! They are print—by other methods—and they are improving fast. This last year has seen so many inventions in the printing industry that it can be said to stand on the brink of a revolution. The greatest activity has been in the development of superior typewriter composing machines, in the two micro-techniques, and the possibility of substituting printing by electrical conductivity for printing by pressure. Some of these inventions are so new that they consist of one or two experimental models, and little can therefore be asserted about cost (but it will be low) or productivity (but it will be high). This much, however, can be stated flatly: to them belongs the future of specialized scholarly printing.

Let there be more curiosity about the perfectibility of these new techniques. Typewriter composition, direct-image offset printing, microfilm—all are capable of great development, to the end that free trade in ideas can be continued, while the publishing of definitive books goes on unhampered. Too large a proportion of funds available for specialized publishing are being put into too few titles, put there because of a rigid adherence to traditional printing methods.

Unless the presses accept these non-letterpress techniques, explore them with sympathy, and improve them by experiment, other organizations will do so. Microfilm, both printing and publishing, has already passed into other hands. The library is tentatively moving into an unoccupied field. Certain offset printers are considering greater publishing responsibilities. And if this happens, scholarship as a whole will be the loser. Whatever may be said against the university presses on grounds of technological conservatism, they have developed to a high degree the arts of scholarly publishing. If they increasingly apply these to general publishing alone, while leaving to the specialist in other processes the task of doing it all over again, then traffic in ideas will be greatly handicapped. It is said that about as much knowledge is being lost today as is being discovered. Any more hardening of the arteries of scholarly communication, and even this precarious balance may be disturbed.

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Boss of the "Fighting Carpenters": William L. Hutcheson

Charles A. Madison

UNTIL close to the end of the nineteenth century most buildings in this country were made of wood. Carpenters not only erected them, but formed most of the special parts—such as pillars and newel posts, doors and window frames—on the premises. Their long apprenticeship provided them with this specialized skill, and gave them a relatively high standing among craftsmen.

In 1881, Peter J. McGuire, a one-time radical and then head of the St. Louis carpenters, led a small group of union officials from several cities in the formation of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. McGuire was deeply interested in trade unionism. A close friend of Samuel Gompers, he aided materially in the formation of the American Federation of Labor, and provided it with its philosophical foundations. The Brotherhood, however, commanded his greatest devotion. For twenty years, he was its general secretary and its most influential leader.

The Brotherhood became greatly strengthened in 1888 after its amalgamation with the United Order of Carpenters, which comprised the New York City locals with a membership of 5,000. It was as a result of this merger that the word "United" was added to its name. Two years later the English-Speaking Framers of New York likewise joined the United Brotherhood. The German framers and cabinet makers merged with it several years later. These acquisitions

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This article, adapted from a chapter of Mr. Madison's *Labor's Progress: Unionization and Leadership* (to be published by Harper & Bros. in 1950), will be followed in the Summer, 1949, number by an article on Sidney Hillman and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

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helped to make the union one of the largest and strongest in the American Federation of Labor, and this position of power propelled it on an aggressive career.

The Brotherhood's first show of strength was exercised in behalf of the shorter day. In 1890, with the Federation's backing, it launched labor's campaign for the eight-hour day. So united was its stand on May 1, that in 137 cities it was completely successful; in most other places it gained the nine-hour day. The 1893 depression, however, largely nullified these gains. During this period the Brotherhood lost more than half its members—from 56,937 in 1891 to 25,152 four years later—and became too weak even to maintain its normal advantages. . . .

Technological changes in the building industry and the development of the skyscraper combined to reduce the amount of work available to skilled carpenters. As buildings increased in height, the need for fire protection made necessary the substitution of steel and concrete for wood. In addition, more and more of the standard parts formerly made by craftsmen on the premises now arrived ready-made from woodworking machine shops.

Carpenters out of work or employed only intermittently—and very few worked as many as 200 days a year—deeply resented this turn of fortune. To maximize their opportunities for employment and to augment its own scope and power, the Brotherhood adopted the following credo: "Once wood, it is always the right of the carpenter to install it, no matter what the material now used may happen to be." In pursuit of this new policy, it began to raid other woodworking unions and to extend its jurisdictional claims wherever possible. Originally limited to carpenters engaged in "outside" work on buildings, it began in 1888 to claim jurisdiction over "inside" machine woodworkers. This started inter-union wrangling. When the International Furniture Workers Union and the Machine Wood Workers Union combined in 1895 for their self-protection, the Brotherhood merely intensified its raiding program. Protest to the American Federation of Labor brought the aggrieved union no relief, since the aggressive carpenters ignored all admonitions. Their frank aim became the enrollment of all woodworkers into the Brotherhood. Persistent harassment in time forced many of these

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men—anxious to keep themselves employed—to change union affiliation. As a consequence, after more than a decade of vain resistance, the enfeebled union of woodworkers had no choice but to merge with its stronger rival.

Similar tactics destroyed another "dual" union—the American branch of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters. When the younger but stronger union entered upon its career of aggression, it began to raid and harass the older rival as a matter of policy. The result was a series of disputes of increasing acerbity. During the 1903 lockout in the New York building trades, the Brotherhood was the first to sign an agreement with the embattled employers and thereby succeeded in barring the other union from the metropolitan labor market. Although the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, greatly weakened, continued the struggle for several years longer, it finally had to give up its independent existence.

Perhaps the most acrimonious and protracted jurisdictional dispute in labor history was the struggle between the Brotherhood and the Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers Union. In 1905, when metal trim doors were first introduced, the carpenters saw their field of work curtailed still further, and decided to fight back. They insisted that the erection of metal cornices required the same skill as wood cornices and that carpentry tools were used to put up metal trim doors. The sheet metal workers maintained that metal was their job, both in production and erection. This contention the carpenters ignored. Ten times as large, they were in a strategic position to compel many builders to employ members of the Brotherhood instead of sheet metal workers. The resulting friction became more bitter with every job dispute.

On the face of the evidence, the officials of the American Federation of Labor and its Building Trades Department could not but side with the union of metal workers. When the Brotherhood balked, it was suspended for noncompliance. This gesture was futile, however, in view of the carpenters' dominant position within the department; and after several years of agitation, the Federation was again compelled to appease the intransigent union by deciding that the erection of metal trim was the work of carpenters.

This appeasement did not, however, end the jurisdictional dispute.

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In 1920 the Sheet Metal Workers Union appealed to the National Board of Jurisdictional Awards, and was awarded the work on metal trim. The Brotherhood refused to comply, and was strong enough to pursue its destructive tactics at will. The dispute was finally settled in 1928 by the carpenters receiving the right to install metal trim, and by the metal workers obtaining jurisdiction over jobs done by sheet metal contractors. Thus the aggressive giant (with 400,000 members) and the persistent pigmy (with 25,000 members) at last agreed to live in peace.

Simultaneously with its reputation for jurisdictional rapacity, the Brotherhood acquired one for corrupt practices and for a high incidence of venality among its officials. It was originally as high-minded and commendable as any of the existing labor unions, but peculiar conditions and strong temptation gradually demoralized a good many of its officers.

For many years it was the custom among the organized carpenters for the first man on a building job to become the shop steward. It was his function to look after the interests of the other workers and to take up grievances with the contractors. Since the shop steward was an employed worker, his effectiveness as union spokesman was frequently vitiated by his fear of prejudicial treatment on the part of the employer. As the Brotherhood gained in strength and began to uphold its interests aggressively, it replaced the shop steward with a walking delegate or business agent. This union representative, not being a working carpenter, was in a position to protest working abuses without fear of reprisal. Devoting his full time to the union, and often the only paid local official, he in time took over functions which gave him considerable power.

One of the basic powers granted to him was the authority to call a strike at his discretion. This was done because some building jobs, especially those undertaken by sub-contractors, lasted only a few days and made it impossible for the union to control unscrupulous employers. Only the business agent, adequately empowered, was in a position to act promptly and effectively. With the cooperation of the business agents of other unions on the job, he was able to stop work on any building and thereby force sub-contractors to observe the terms of the union contract.

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Normally the business agents in the building trades would have functioned as labor politicians of other unions do—enjoying their privileged position without flagrantly abusing it. Unscrupulous builders, however, brought about their corruption and venality. Bidding for building jobs was not infrequently accompanied by the exercise of sharp practices and cut-throat rivalry. Fraudulent contractors did not hesitate to resort to chicane and bribery in order to discomfit and even ruin their competitors. When business agents in the building trades were given authority to call strikes at will, these employers did not scruple to tempt them with bribes and job preferences in their efforts to gain advantage over their rivals. Collusion of this kind, aggravated by the employment of thugs and "gorillas" for purposes of intimidation and sabotage, tended to bring the building industry almost to a condition of chaos.

In this period of anarchy, Sam Parks emerged as the boss of the building trades of New York. Brought from Chicago by the George A. Fuller Construction Company when it decided to do business in the metropolis, he soon succeeded in gaining control of his own ironworkers union. Before long he became the leader of all business agents in the building trades. He then proceeded to exact bribes from contractors who wished to avoid strikes on their jobs. Long after he had achieved this commanding position, he remained on the Fuller payroll, and made sure that this company was free of labor trouble while its competitors were plagued with strikes. His corrupt practices were not unknown to many members of his union, but they condoned his venality because of their gratitude to him for raising their wages from $2.50 to $4.50 per day. His stranglehold on the building trades was broken only after he had been convicted on a charge of bribery and sentenced to a term in jail. At about the same time, Chicago under "Skinny" Madden and San Francisco under Patrick H. McCarthy likewise suffered from flagrant collusion and corruption in the building trades.

The most conspicuous of these "labor czars" was Robert P. Brindell. An almost illiterate dockworker, he became in 1912 the head of the New York Pier and Dock Carpenters Union. Two years later he affiliated his organization with the Brotherhood. His friendship with William L. Hutcheson, the new head of the union,

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made it possible for him to gain dominance over the building trades unions of New York. By 1919 he was in full control. One of his first acts was to convert the Board of Business Agents into the Building Trades Council, and to make himself its president for life. Although his autocratic rule violated many of the by-laws of the Building Trades Department, its officers refused to interfere. The Building Trades Employers Association likewise encouraged Brindell's dictatorship by contracting with him to employ none but his workers, with the understanding that these craftsmen were to work only for members of the Association.

It soon became common practice for builders and contractors to consult with Brindell, at a price, before beginning work on any construction job. When a contractor occasionally complained to officials of the Association against Brindell's exorbitant charges for what he euphemistically called "strike insurance," he was quickly informed that "Brindell is doing a wonderful work in stabilizing the business, and we must stand behind him." Assured of this cooperation, Brindell kept increasing his fees to builders and made sure that no work was done before he received adequate tribute. These bribes became as much a part of building cost as sand, lumber and brick, and contractors included them in their estimates as a matter of course.

Brindell requested tribute not only from employers, but also from union members under his control, and their monthly contributions amounted to more than $100,000. In addition he sold 300 weekly "privilege to work" cards, at ten dollars each, to non-union workers. When the house wreckers union refused to pay up, Brindell formed a dual union, and forced employers to deal with it exclusively despite the obvious incompetence of its men. The few who refused he drove out of business. When one of these unfortunate contractors complained to Hugh Frayne, New York general organizer for the Federation, the reply was: "I know the thing is utterly unjust, but this man Brindell is all-powerful. He can stop or start work any time in New York City." This power was enhanced by Tammany officials with whom he shared some of his graft. To give him political prestige, Mayor Hylan made him a member of the City Housing Commission.

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Brindell netted more than a million dollars in two years. His downfall came about as a result of the excessive profiteering on the part of members of the Building Trades Employers Association. Their exorbitant monopoly prices around 1920—certain items as much as 300 per cent over normal rates—caused the building industry to come almost to a standstill, and led to its investigation by the Lockwood Committee. The Association members were reproved by the Committee, but Brindell was convicted on a charge of having accepted a bribe of $5,000 for settling a strike, and was sent to jail for a term of from five to ten years. His fellow labor leaders supported him to the end, but by the time he was paroled, after serving three years and nine months, his power over the New York building trades was definitely broken.

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters made no effort to rid itself of this canker of corruption. Most of its national officers were devoting themselves to building up their own power, and were not interested in curbing venal business agents so long as they kept their locals strong and tractable.

William L. Hutcheson, who became president of the Brotherhood in 1915, and who has retained the office ever since, perfected the union's policy of aggression and self-seeking. Born in Saginaw County, Michigan, on February 2, 1874, the son of a ship's carpenter, he had been apprenticed at the age of sixteen to his father. In 1902 he joined the Brotherhood. Four years later, he became the business agent of his local—a position for which he was eminently fitted by virtue of his huge build and aggressive attitude. Successful at his job, he was sent to the Brotherhood convention in 1910. He quickly impressed his powerful personality upon the general officers of the union. His chance came three years later, when he was elected second vice-president. Arthur Quinn, who was chosen first vice-president, did not want to move to the Brotherhood's headquarters in Indianapolis (as required by the constitution), and persuaded Hutcheson to trade positions with him. As a consequence of this exchange, the comparative newcomer gained the presidency two years afterward when the incumbent James Kirby died suddenly.

Hutcheson at once took complete charge of the Brotherhood. A Methodist, a Mason, a staunch Republican, schooled in the prevailing

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anarchy of rugged individualism, determined to keep himself in office and ready to crush the slightest opposition to his bureaucratic rule, he became one of the most ruthless and reactionary labor leaders in the trade union movement. Aware that his position and power depended upon the militancy with which he pursued the union's jurisdictional claims, he greatly intensified the union imperialism of his predecessors. Despite temporary setbacks, he was able to triple the membership of the Brotherhood, and to keep it the strongest affiliate of the American Federation of Labor. In the process he acted with contemptuous disregard, not only of the claims of other unions, but of the protests of a good share of his own membership.

One of the most flagrant instances of his misuse of power occurred less then a year after he had become president. The New York City carpenters, having worked for about nine years without a wage increase, decided late in 1915 to demand an additional fifty cents a day. The Brotherhood approved the action, and negotiations began. Soon 14,000 carpenters were given the desired increase. To help out the unsatisfied 3,000 members, the local unions permitted them to call a strike. Victory seemed assured until Hutcheson suddenly arrived in New York. Ignoring the local strike leaders, he and Brindell at once conferred with the leading employers. His next move was to call a meeting of the strikers, and to inform them that he had settled the dispute at the old wage rate—an agreement that at least temporarily rescinded the wage increase already obtained by most of the carpenters. He then entrained for Indianapolis.

The shocked carpenters felt outraged at this high-handed betrayal of their cause. By a vote of 11,745 to 119, they rejected their president's "corrupt bargain" and extended the strike to all locals. The New York State Council of Carpenters approved of their action, and condemned Hutcheson's interference "as a betrayal of the interests of the carpenters of New York and a violation of the principles of the labor movement."

Angered by this presumed insubordination, Hutcheson suspended the sixty-five rebellious locals, and returned to New York to help break the strike. With Brindell's aid, he began to supply strike-breakers to friendly contractors. United and persistent effort on the part of the strikers brought them victory despite the obstructive

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tactics of their president. Later that year he refused to give them a hearing at the Brotherhood convention, and barred them from the hall with the aid of the police. Soon after, however, the court ordered Hutcheson to reinstate the expelled carpenters as "members in good standing."

Hutcheson was not in the slighest chastened by his New York defeat. So complete was his control of the Brotherhood bureaucracy by that time, and so scornful was he of the malcontent faction, that he persisted in acting with arbitrary irresponsibility. To simplify matters, he arranged to hold conventions only every fourth year; during the depression he did not call a general meeting for eight years; and after 1940 he waited another six years. At these sessions, he presided with the insolence and absolutism of the cynical autocrat. Those who opposed his measures were compelled to stand up and have their names recorded; those who persisted in their criticisms were first declared out of order and then expelled.

At the 1924 convention, his pet project of the Old Age Home at Lakeland, Florida, aroused bitter antagonism among a sizable minority of the delegates. Hutcheson had conceived the plan in a burst of benevolence. He had bought the large plot of land on his own initiative, and was determined to proceed with the erection of the Home. His critics opposed the project as wasteful and needless. His reaction was typical—he either ruled them out of order or simply ignored them. The leader of the opposition, Mulcahy of Providence, was twice assulted near his hotel. When he persisted in his criticism, his resolution was tabled indefinitely, and he himself was suspended, despite the backing of 281 locals from every part of the country. It should be added that after 1930 the Brotherhood began to pay modest pensions to those eligible members in good standing who preferred to remain at home.

Hutcheson had his way. The best energies of the Brotherhood for nearly a decade went into the Home. It was opened on October 1, 1928, after an expenditure of $4,000,000. Every member was assessed six dollars. Not many aged carpenters took advantage of this asylum, and in 1946 it housed only 246 men. A fitting memorial to the spirit of this benevolent enterprise is the Hutcheson Golf Club —used by guests rather than by the inmates.

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As earlier in New York, in 1924 Hutcheson came to Chicago and proceeded to interfere in the affairs of the local carpenters, in complete disregard of their rights and wishes. The campaign by employers for the open shop in the building trades had been causing great provocation for several years. In 1922 Judge Landis was asked to arbitrate the dispute between the unions and the builders. His award in favor of the open shop was strongly opposed by the city's workers, and over 140,000 marched in protest against it. When Hutcheson arrived two years later, he and Harry Jensen, the unpopular president of the District Council, met with five of the largest contractors and signed an agreement that purported to grant the closed shop. On the strength of this favorable report, Jensen was re-elected the next day. Several weeks later, however, the carpenters learned that the deal actually affirmed the open shop, and that the wording almost paralleled the obnoxious Landis award.

The deceived carpenters were deeply chagrined. At the Brotherhood convention later that year they presented the following resolution for action by the delegates:

> Resolved, that Carpenters Local No. 181 condemns the agreement as being detrimental to the interests of the carpenters and further condemns the methods used in entering the agreement as being the cheapest kind of political trickery.

Not only was the resolution not read to the assembled delegates; its sponsors were peremptorily expelled from the convention.

The opposition to Hutcheson, festering for years, thereupon came to a head. A total of 43,410 votes were counted against his re-election. To crush this rebellious faction, he resorted to persecution and expulsion. The first blow fell on Morris Rosen, the active rival candidate, when he and his New York local 376 were expelled from the Brotherhood. A Rosen supporter who experienced the same fate was William Reynolds, president of the Detroit local 2140. Additional victims were a New York local accused of communist domination; Fred W. Burgess of Philadelphia, charged with having talked disparagingly of Hutcheson; and sixteen members of the Los Angeles District Council who had joined the communist Trade Union Educational League.

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Thereafter, none defied Hutcheson without immediate reprisal. When, in 1928, Max Perlow disregarded Hutcheson's order not to call out the furniture workers of New York on strike for the forty-hour week, he was assaulted and subsequently expelled, despite the fact that the strike was won. About the same time, Hutcheson rejected the legally elected officers of New York local 2717 and recognized the rump organization of the defeated officers who were his friends. In this instance, he was thwarted because the elected men took the case to court and were restored to their rightful offices by the referee.

The net effect on the Brotherhood was a drifting away of dissident or dissatisfied members. Although the union remained strong, until recently its membership never included more than about 60 per cent of the country's woodworkers. The depression of the early 1930's intensified the deterioration of the union. As many as 80 per cent of the carpenters were for a time out of work, and many of them simply dropped out. In New York, to cite a conspicuous instance, the membership declined from about 30,000 in 1929 to 10,000 in 1936— a year in which most unions had showed extraordinary gains. The Brotherhood fared somewhat better over the country as a whole, largely because it added to its ranks the relatively numerous woodworkers in the furniture shops and Northwest mills and logger camps, who had been formed into federal unions by Federation organizers. Hutcheson had insisted on bringing these locals into the Brotherhood, but he did not altogether trust them. He placed their members in the "non-beneficial class"; they were to pay dues of only a quarter a month instead of a dollar, but they were to have no voice in the benefits or direction of the Brotherhood. At the 1936 convention, these newcomers constituted nearly half of the total national membership of 301,875.

When the question of craft versus industrial unionism began to divide the American Federation of Labor into two factions, Hutcheson was so bitter against the industrial unionists headed by John L. Lewis that he threatened to take the Brotherhood out of the Federation if it permitted any change in policy. At the 1935 convention of the Federation, Hutcheson and Lewis fought over the issue, not only with their sharp tongues but with their heavy fists. This vehement

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opposition of the "Boss Carpenter" undoubtedly intimidated William Green—he praised Hutcheson as "a strong personality, an outstanding character, a forceful man"—and thus influenced him to permit the split within organized labor.

The formation of the C.I.O. soon gave the Brotherhood considerable trouble. The lumber workers in the Northwest, having no voice in the conduct of the union, and disgusted with its corrupt and reactionary administration, seceded in 1937 and organized themselves into the International Woodworkers of America, C.I.O. Although the new union soon had around 100,000 members and an efficient leadership, it nearly succumbed to Hutcheson's attacks. For he had arranged with Dave Beck, boss of the teamsters of that region, not to move "C.I.O. wood" from the mills. Many of the workers, desperate for employment, rejoined the Brotherhood. For several years the jurisdictional fight was cruel and relentless. Hutcheson was determined to destroy the "rebel" union, regardless of the effect upon organized labor. But the majority of the woodworkers persisted in maintaining their own organization. The federal government took note of the unfairness of the attack and sued the Brotherhood, under the Sherman Act, for conspiracy against the Harbord Plywood Corporation, whose employees belonged to the International Woodworkers. The war effort, which began in 1940, likewise came to the aid of the struggling union. At this writing it is solidly organized, and boasts of 75,000 members.

The furniture workers and cabinet makers, long antagonized by Hutcheson's high-handed tactics, left the Brotherhood in 1933 and functioned as an independent industrial union. Four years later, they joined the C.I.O. as the United Furniture Workers Union of America. The industrial form of organization greatly facilitated their unionization. Previously, framers, wood carvers and upholsterers had belonged to different craft locals. To combine them for united action was an outstanding feat. Now, as members of a single industrial union, they act together and are able to improve their economic position more readily and with greater effectiveness. The present membership of this union exceeds 55,000.

These defections from the Brotherhood caused Hutcheson to intensify his denunciation of the C.I.O. and the New Deal administra-

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tion. His autocratic rule of the Brotherhood continued to handicap its growth. At a time when most unions had doubled and trebled in membership within a few years, the carpenters barely held their own. Nevertheless, with the aid of his son Maurice, whom he had appointed first vice-president, and Frank Duffy, aged secretary of the Brotherhood and his faithful henchman, he stood his ground, embattled and defiant.

The war years provided a bonanza for his administration. The demand for carpentry work became greater than ever before in the history of the country. Hutcheson took full advantage of this highly favorable situation. By insisting on the union shop, by playing contractors one against the other, by intimidating non-union workers, and threatening strikes at crucial periods, he and his organizers soon succeeded in doubling the union's membership. Carpenters who had never belonged to the Brotherhood, but who were eager to earn the high wages in war work, found it to their advantage to apply for membership. And now, with the building industry entering its peak period immediately after the war, the Brotherhood continues to ride high and mighty. So long as this condition endures, it is hardly likely that Hutcheson will want or be forced to clean house. In the foreseeable future the Brotherhood is bound to remain the conspicuous example of an undemocratic and grasping trade union.

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Epitaph

Peggy Thomson

Witchwise I am buried
Quiet let me lie
Where the spring and summer
In crossroads tie

Because I learned spidercraft
And birdnote
And wore a jade-eyed lizard
At my bare throat

Because I had a grass-green
Snake in to tea
Because I for lover
Took a slim birch tree
Crossing themselves
The righteous killed me

Witchwise I am buried
Sweet let me rest
With a white reed driven
In my white breast

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Plowman

Frances Frost

When the raindrops hang like silver berries
from the yet-leafless budded bough,
and the spicy white of the mountain cherry
feathers the sky, and the bucking plow

turns thawed earth into wet dark furrows,
a man may curse the unseen stones
that jolt a plowhandle into his ribs;
but he feels in earth's unfrozen bones

that same fierce upward urge of spring
that shakes his own tall skeleton.
The reins about his neck, he groans
and grins and shouts the chestnut on.

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A Note on American Culture

Eric Bentley

THAT America exists has been known to Europeans for some four hundred fifty-six years. That America is wealthy our great-grandparents might have learned from Tocqueville and Dickens. But how long has Europe known that America has writers? Yes: Carlyle and Nietzsche were readers of Emerson; Baudelaire and Mallarmé translated Poe; D. H. Lawrence wrote the best of all the books on the American "classics" in general. But these instances are scattered and separated. They do not amount to a movement or a tendency. As far as I know, European interest in American writing did not become general, did not embrace the bulk of the reading public, until the present decade. If I might venture a big statement à la Victor Hugo: Columbus opened up the American continent; Jean-Paul Sartre opened up the American intelligence. At any rate M. Sartre has done more than anybody else to give to America and American letters their present vogue in his country.

How are we to explain this vogue? I'm afraid the basic reason for it is crude and vulgar: America has become a world power, and power makes more of an impression than anything else. The discovery of the atom bomb in America confirms Emerson on self-reliance. The success of Hollywood movies with the European masses is followed, after a discreet interval, by the success of Faulkner and Melville with the European intelligentsia. Who knows but what the Marshall Planners will include an American classic in every food package? The great powers used to send rum and Bibles to less happy climes. Is not America in this tradition if she sends canned milk and the works of Henry Miller?

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This article is an address (slightly revised) which was made before a French audience.

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As this world goes, power means prestige, even intellectual prestige. Hence the prestige of the powerful is always to be looked at with suspicion. I should say that there is something suspicious in the cult of America, just as there is something suspicious in the cult of Russia. If a foreign power is rich and strong, there is a tendency to believe that all the virtues have been added unto it. We like to believe, in any case, that somewhere else (not in our street, but around the corner) things are in much better shape—how much more so if the people around the corner are rich and strong! In a man's high opinion of the strength of others one can read his own weakness. The weak man finds in the strong qualities the latter does not possess, and fails to find the qualities he does possess.

I shall not describe M. Sartre as a weak man. Yet it is obvious that he looks rather longingly at what he takes to be the tough virility of Faulkner, envies his strength, and fails completely to find the source of that strength. Among people influenced by Sartre in France I have heard, for instance, three American novelists spoken of in the same breath as if they were of equal merit: William Faulkner, John Steinbeck and James M. Cain. Nobody points out that these are writers of quite different orders of talent. Faulkner is of a very high order; there is only one Faulkner in American literature. Steinbeck is of a less high order; there are half-a-dozen Steinbecks in America today—gifted fellows spoiled by success, darlings of the "middle-brow" public. Cain is of a rather low order; there are a score of Cains in California alone.

What do Faulkner, Steinbeck and Cain have in common? Simply that violence which the new French writers think of as so wonderfully and characteristically American. The violence of gangster-life, of boogie-woogie, of the *Time Magazine* prose style. Well and good —perhaps this style of performance has something to teach M. Sartre. If so, all he needs is Cain. Faulkner (or even Steinbeck) is unnecessary. I am not saying that M. Sartre is under any obligation to know American literature. I am saying that his printed accounts of it seem desperately superficial, just as his printed accounts of American life, in *La Putain Respectueuse* and elsewhere, seem desperately superficial. Don't misunderstand me. Neither I nor many others in America were offended by *La Putain*. Nor were we bored by it. In its

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naïveté and melodramatic crudity, I thought it, to use Oscar Wilde's description of Tree's Hamlet, funny without being vulgar.

And now I find myself assuming an attitude I don't approve of —that of the champion of native against foreign opinion. I resent it when a Russian tells me that only Russians can understand Chekhov, or when a German tells me that only Germans can understand *Faust*, because I know silly colleagues of mine in America and England who say that only Anglo-Saxons can understand Shakespeare. Last year a French professor came to America to inform us that M. Sartre is an American fad, that no one in France reads him, and that all his ideas had been refuted once and for all—and that by the professor himself in a book entitled such-and-such, autographed copies of which we could all obtain for a modest sum. My own rejection of Cain, and partial rejection of Steinbeck, would be regarded by many Americans as a similar sort of racketeering, though I haven't written a book against these authors. But I differ from the anti-existentialist professor in believing that even if Sartre *were* respected in America and not in France, America might be right and France wrong; or, at any rate, America and France might be right in different ways. Similarly, French readers may be right in their high estimate of Henry Miller, American readers wrong in their low estimate of him; or both may be partly wrong and partly right. I do not condemn Sartre for writing about America as a visitor: Tocqueville also was only a visitor. And, in all candor, I should add that some Americans would regard me as a visitor: I have lived in America only a few years. What I must hope is that I have had enough time to receive some impressions that are not wholly misleading. Born and bred a European, I am at least acutely aware of those things that the European finds remarkable on the other side of the ocean.

Since my theme will be that the American situation is complex, I must take as starting point the classic European simplification of it: the idea that American society is summed up in such books as *Babbitt*, and that the American writer is summed up in such a figure as Sinclair Lewis—America is a desert of rotarianism, and the desert is occasionally explored by a Great Realist to whom accordingly belong such labels as Daring Frankness and Ruthless Exposure. Again: don't

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misunderstand me. I am not calling Lewis a liar. He was doing something that writers must at all times do: telling the truth as he saw it—and indeed as it was and is. But no novel can undertake to be a foreigner's comprehensive guide to a country. That we do base our ideas of a place to a large extent on fiction is unfortunate: we shouldn't blame the novelists for not doing what they were under no obligation to do; we should blame ourselves for forgetting that fiction, however realistic, is fiction. I am told that the novels of Dreiser, Lewis, Farrell and others have given an unfavorable impression of America to Europeans. So they should, of course. Just as *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *Madame Bovary* and *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* should give an unfavorable impression of France. Even in America life is life: injustice, hatred, cruelty and obscenity abound, and it is the duty of writers to say so.

On the one hand, the balloon of a bourgeois civilization; on the other, a debunker to prick it. Have there, then, been no positive values in American life? Or, if there have, didn't the writers say so? I would say that there have been such values. And when I say further that American writers said so, I do not have in mind chauvinists or journalists, politicians or preachers. I do not have in mind only writers who praised America. The outlook of Melville and Hawthorne is tragic; but America worked on them, I think, not only as irritant but as nourisher. Henry James found America in many ways quite hideous, yet Europe is the villain of many of his stories, and America the hero—or perhaps one should say heroine. Even among writers who openly praise America there are one or two geniuses—most conspicuously, Walt Whitman. Those who have simplified American culture generally simplify Whitman in particular. Out of their own naïveté they make him naïve. I would say that Whitman not only talks about the positive values of American life, but that he embodies them too. This means, incidentally, that he is critical as well as enthusiastic. Democracy, whenever it is not merely a name, encourages criticism. And even the most negative criticism implies certain positive values—such as veracity.

I stress this because during the war a polemical offensive was launched against writers like Sinclair Lewis—not by Babbitt and the business men from Main Street, but by other American writers with

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some pretensions to learning and intelligence. Writers who had criticized America in the twenties were declared to be irresponsible. So were nearly all the leading European writers of the age: the fall of France was blamed on Proust. Indeed, to write in the critical spirit, in the modern spirit, was to conduct un-American activities: it was to be influenced by Europe. As in all countries in wartime, cultural nationalism made its appearance. As ever, this nationalism produced many words but no literature. That is why I cannot say: "Lay aside Sinclair Lewis and Henry Miller. American literature is a patriotic literature, a heroic literature, an optimistic literature. Read X, Y and Z." What I must say is: "Read Lewis by all means, especially the early Lewis, who is more talented as well as more gloomy than the later. And read the American classics, many of which are gloomier than Lewis could ever dream of being, but positive for all that." It is one of the most foolish illusions to believe that "positive" must mean "optimistic"—or that optimism is necessarily positive. It is because the best American writers saw cheap bourgeois optimism as negative that they depicted their country—or life generally—in such somber colors. This depiction was not a mere negative act. They had positive allegiances; they had faith and imagination which had been nourished by the very environment which they saw to be, to a great extent, bad.

What was true in the nineteenth century is true today: the best American writing, far from expressing the brash self-confidence which foreigners think of as the great American trait, is somber, deeply critical of America, yet only in a childish sense unpatriotic. At the moment possibly the most significant work-in-progress in America is *Paterson*, a long poem in which the sixty-year-old poet William Carlos Williams tries to make myth (though by no means regionalist propaganda) out of the story of a town in New Jersey. Williams couldn't wave a flag or thump a tub if he tried, but another of his titles, *In the American Grain*, is enough to suggest how seriously he takes America. If you will read Williams' poems and stories, you will see how a poet may be attached to his country without making a fool of himself, without ceasing to be a poet. A better known writer, Archibald MacLeish, in *America Is Promises*, had, it seems to me, much less success, perhaps because patriotism in litera-

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ture is the less effective for being overt and oratorical. As propaganda in France, anyway, I cannot think that a magniloquent Americanism has any value. No nation is impressed by the patriotic bombast of another nation. In others, if not in ourselves, we respect a more genuine patriotism. And the patriotism (if the word is not too blunt) of Williams is more genuine than that of the orators, in being so much less political.

I mean that it is not in the nation as a power in the world that Williams is interested, but in one's country as habitat: the place where we live. *Paterson* is not a martial epic, but an act of piety toward the household gods. When I call Williams American, I have in mind something like Marx's statement that a man is the sum of his social relationships. The social relationships of a medical man in New Jersey provide a pretty large and typical network of American experience. I have in mind also what Mr. Mencken calls "the American language," which Williams speaks and writes. This language is not, as M. Sartre seems to think, a mere matter of slang and tough-talk. It is a variant of English that derives its identity not only from a special vocabulary but, even more characteristically, from a special melody, tempo and rhythm. It is an interesting fact that one of the writers who first claimed this language for poetry, thus helping to create a modern American poetry, has been politically speaking, not only unpatriotic, but actually traitorous. I refer to Ezra Pound.

I am arguing, then, that American literature really *is* American in a way—if not quite in the way of the naïve nationalist. William Carlos Williams is an example. So is Ezra Pound. A different instance could be provided by the outstanding new novelist of this decade, Robert Penn Warren. Warren belongs to a school of American writing much less known in France than the satiric realism of a writer like Lewis: the Southern School. Faulkner is the only big name here, though in America Katherine Anne Porter is almost as well known, and Robert Penn Warren won the Pulitzer Prize in 1947. Some of the Southerners have called themselves Agrarians, meaning that they are against large-scale capitalism and urban civilization generally, and preach the idea of private property divided into small amounts. Warren's three novels—*Night Rider*, *At Heav-*

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en's Gate, and *All the King's Men*—have been taken by some as Agrarian books, therefore as politically reactionary, therefore as un-American. Again "American" means something very simple, simpler than the facts. Take another look at Warren and you'll find him to be sufficiently American (without, I think, being reactionary). He does not see the American scene as background, as stage backcloth for his stories: he and his people are rooted in American soil. By now you will grant me that there is nothing un-American in Warren's criticizing what he believes to be American illusions. Nor would his positive ideas, his philosophy of self-fulfillment, amaze Emerson.

Equally American, I should say, is the novelist and critic Lionel Trilling. I don't know that the circle in which Mr. Trilling moves has been called a school, yet Mr. Trilling and other New Yorkers who write for *Partisan Review*, seem to have at least as marked an identity as the Agrarians. Many of the members of this group began as Communists or as sympathizers with communism. At the time of the Moscow trials or later, they broke with the party, and have been ever since the angriest leftwing critics of Russia. They criticize the Agrarians as not being sufficiently political. They assert that the critical consciousness of the avant-garde can be applied to politics as well as culture—indeed must be so, since politics and culture are all of a piece.

Mr. Trilling's novel *The Middle of the Journey* is one of the important American documents of this decade. The story it tells resembles Mr. Sartre's *Les Mains Sales*, but Mr. Trilling's book seems to me a superior piece of writing—at any rate, it gives a much fuller portrait of the liberal intellectual in the orbit of communism. Another point that may be of interest to the student of the American scene is that the conclusions of a Trilling and a Warren—members of two extreme wings of the American intelligentsia—are not irreconcilable. Both writers criticize a political idealism that has its source in a sickly and divided ego—both see that the supreme escapist is the man who runs away from himself. Both are critics of liberalism, but, being critics of totalitarianism too, are, by implication at least, advocates of a more critical liberalism—a more rational practicality, a more practical rationality.

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Rather than lengthen the list of current American poets and novelists, I shall now turn again to the general situation. If you have granted me that American culture is rich and varied, and that therefore the idea "American writer" cannot be a simple one, permit me to consider next some facts and problems of the cultural scene.

Most famously, *the commercializing of culture* (of which Hollywood is the best-known symbol, though in actual American life the radio seems to me a more insistent, incessant bad influence). What is the result for the imaginative writer? It is, I think, still further to widen the gap between him and society. It is a paradox of democracy in America that it divides the intelligentsia even more decisively from everyone else than many much less democratic societies have done. The intellectual in America is a radically alienated personality. There is no educated aristocracy. There is this intelligentsia—a name that covers all those who were born on Main Street, whether at the rich or the poor end, but who read Sinclair Lewis in high school.

At the moment I am not condemning America for creating this situation. I would rather commend a good many American intellectuals for the headway they make in efforts to be human in spite of all. Precisely because American life puts so many obstacles in the way of the artist, it has been a challenge to him—an obstacle race. Unsupported by a traditional culture, or an educational system he can respect, he walks alone.

"American students are so naïve," I was once told by an English friend. "How so?" I asked. "Why," he replied, "the English undergraduate never says he just read a famous book; at worst, he says he has just re-read it. Your American says right out that he's never heard of it before." The fact that the American student starts from nothing and knows it, seems to me to have its advantages. He is not taken in by the reputation of a classic. He has to be convinced that it deserves his approval. His teacher is driven to desperation, and thence to a reconsideration of first principles.

I am not wandering from my theme. To speak of a culture, or a state of letters, one must know the channels in which that culture flows. The universities of today are surely, in this respect, as important as the royal courts of yesterday. Taking on a higher propor-

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tion of the population than the universities of any other country, the American universities had to permit a lowering of standards, which was an unfortunate thing. Nonetheless, the perpetual American tendency to start with a clean slate is not wholly unfortunate. I want to mention a theory and practice of literary education that is now growing up in America to meet the requirements of the situation.

In its higher flights the new method is being called the New Criticism—that is, the literary criticism of such men as T. S. Eliot, R. P. Blackmur, John Crowe Ransom and Allen Tate. In revolt against the mere belles-lettres of impressionistic critics and, at the other extreme, the pedantry of mere scholarship, these critics asked us to return to the text and give it a careful reading. For a criticism that flees the text on every possible tangent, it substituted a criticism that sticks close to the text and aims solely at a better experiencing of each work.

The procedure was exactly what was needed in the classroom: less of appreciative chit-chat, less merely formal presentation of the background, more attention to the actual words of the writer. Teachers took up the idea and were helped to carry it out by textbooks—especially one textbook in particular, a book that won a national reputation—*Understanding Poetry* by Robert Penn Warren and Cleanth Brooks.

An explicit example of the way things work in America is to be found in a small but distinguished college in Ohio—Kenyon College—where one of the best American poets, John Crowe Ransom, teaches. Being a poet and a modern, Ransom wished to know why poetry, modern poetry included, was little read and less understood. In the age of radio, movies and yellow journalism, we are forgetting how to read. What can be done about it? Ransom wrote poetry—which provided a text. He wrote criticism—which gave a theory of the text. He taught in the classroom—where he had elbow-room to talk and explain. Last year, with other critics on the teaching faculty, he organized a summer school for future teachers of literature. Thus the influence of one "new critic" and "new teacher" is spreading through the American universities.

I have neglected to mention Mr. Ransom's chief "microphone":

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his literary quarterly, the *Kenyon Review*, which, surely, will stand comparison with literary reviews anywhere. In America such reviews have an importance one is likely to underestimate. Their influence is intangible and quiet, yet I feel that they are—if you'll permit me a rather Churchillian figure—the lifeline of American culture. America is bigger than any European country and less centralized: even New York is scarcely equivalent to Paris or London. Add to this the fact that the intelligentsia consists of people isolated from their communities, and you can see the need in America for publications in which opinions can be stated and exchanged at frequent intervals—the need, in a word, for literary journals. America today has, I think, a very good "line" in such magazines.

I have never before, that I recall, written about America; and, frankly, I find the subject impossible. If, like Mr. Denis Brogan, I thought there was such a thing as national character, I might produce fine generalizations illustrated with charming anecdotes. But I am always troubled by the fact that whenever I call something "American" I can recall something very similar in England or elsewhere. At least I am troubled momentarily. In the end, I think there is less to worry about in the facts than in false categories and simplifications of the facts produced by centuries of nationalist and racist thinking.

In fact, there is no American national character. There is only an American situation. And even the American situation, being so largely one that men have brought about, is not radically different from other human situations. But it *is* different—and, I think, in two contradictory ways. First, the American homeland has not yet experienced total war, and it bears in consequence all the physical and spiritual marks of immunity and isolation: in this respect America is still living in the nineteenth century. Second, however, America is different from Europe in being more "highly developed"—the tendency to mechanize not only industry but the whole life of man has gone further in America than elsewhere. Progress is a funny thing. When the first atom bomb drops on New York, America will catch up with Europe. When there are billboards along all the French highways, and Hollywood movies at every street corner, Europe will have caught up with America.

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The further development of machinery is inevitable. The further vulgarization of culture is highly likely—one sees as much of it in socialist Russia as in capitalist America. Europe can take the less desirable characteristics of mechanized America as a warning. And she can also learn, I think, from the counter-measures that America has been trying out.

This is a time of broken traditions, and of possible fresh starts. *Deutschland im Jahre Null*—Germany in the Year Zero—is the title of Signor Rossellini's new film. It is about the children of central Europe today. The year Zero is the end of everything; but it could also be the beginning of something, if educators know how to deal with masses of uprooted young people with no "background." The American experience is relevant here to the European. For America consists of uprooted Europeans (not to mention uprooted Africans and Asiatics). It differs from European nations chiefly in being less of a "nation" than any of them—in being an agglomeration of different nations. Its national character (if, for a moment, I consent to the term) is not to have a national character. This fact—which, if we need a more positive formulation, I'd call cultural diversity—seems to me in the nature of the American experiment. The failure in the past to include the Negro as an American citizen of the first grade has of course been a most signal blunder. To attempt in the future to form a nation with a "national character," a single cultural pattern, etc., etc., would be worse than a blunder: it would be the end of the American experiment.

People are talking today of the inescapable choice that the world has to make between America and Russia, between capitalism and sovietism. It seems that the Russians are asking the world to accept the Russian version of communism. Is it true that America is—in the same way, with the same significance—asking the world to accept capitalism? There are many Americans who would not accept this proposition. If America differs from Russia on principle, she could hardly show it by saying to the rest of the world, "Please me or perish." She could show it only by insisting that the world be allowed to please itself. There are Americans, after all, who please themselves by voting communist.

Do people in Europe understand this? Do they not, on the con-

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trary, often assume that America is one definite thing, a monolith? The one thing may be good—America may be the Savior of Civilization—or it may be bad—America may be a gigantic Money Bag. The error is identical: to reduce complex and even contradictory facts to a simple and single idea. It is the same error I have mentioned in the purely literary sphere: America is either Sinclair Lewis, the champion of good sense, or Main Street, the stronghold of philistinism.

American society is multiform, confusing and no doubt confused. But, up to now, it has, in general, permitted diversity, and even encouraged it. Diversity, of course, is not good in itself. Only as permitting the growth of human beings has it any value. Diversity, moreover, is not a panacea. It makes the conduct of affairs more, not less, difficult: hence the totalitarian case against it. Diversity is only possible in a critical culture. And a critical culture cannot be an overconfident culture. It cannot, for instance, think of the "common man" as *simply* a positive factor. For the humanity that, indeed, we have "in common" is not wholly rational and benevolent. We assert the equality of our sage selves and the "common man" less because we think the common man as sage as we than because we acknowledge common failings. We have our weakness, our viciousness, in common.

Belief in the potentialities of human beings, knowledge of the wickedness in human hearts, belief in diversity, a critical sense of the difficulties involved—I do not suggest that Americans possess these things more abundantly than other peoples. If such things were confined to the western hemisphere, Americans could only make of their country a New Atlantis—a utopia destined someday to sink into the sea. But ideas know no frontiers; and good ideas do not keep men apart, they bring them together. One should speak less of the "peculiarly American," and more of the peculiarly, the adequately, *human*. If Americans take their stand against the anti-human forces that today are stronger than ever, they will do so not as Americans—for nationalism today is itself anti-human—but as men.

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Ruminations on Death

Paul A. Zahl

Nature abhors the old. . .
—EMERSON

WITH HIS emergence from total animalism into a state of high subjectivity, man has suddenly (that is, within the last 5,000 years) turned the tables on nature. No longer do species and evolutionary considerations compel his activities; the psychological growth of the individual in relation to his fellows is the keynote (still unrecognized by many) of the Coming World. How eminently frustrating, then, when thoughtful man—ever obsessed by the will to live—knows that he has but a few decades of creative existence before he must succumb to evolution's most uncharitable and sardonic ruling.

But must he yield forever to nature's disinterest in individual survival? Is it an absolute cyclicity with which men go down into extinction every generation, to be replaced by a new crop of germ-cell bearing tyros? Well, there is still the reasonable hope that if scientific aspiration and technological progress can be prevented from withering in the dust of crumbling social institutions, then individual wisdom and experience may some day be permitted to gather cumulative strength, instead of ebbing back to zero with each aged generation. . . .

When our neolithic ancestors buried weapons and travel accouterments with their dead, they were premising an existence beyond the grave. In the millennia after those dawn days, the human creature came to see himself as a dual entity composed of mortal body and immortal soul; the phenomenon of human life was even construed by some as a spiritual test trip between two eternities. In beliefs ranging from nirvanaistic foreverness to complete corporeal

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resurrection, we have never ceased hoping, dreaming, praying that death is not the end. Hence, when the biologist ponders the mysteries of life's transience, he is acting in the tradition of all men.

Only a few years ago the biologist would have defined death as an irreversible cessation of metabolic activity. But today, far more than the philosopher, he has had to revise his conception of mortality. Cannot the viruses, dried to a state of zero metabolism, be preserved indefinitely, thereby virtually negating death? Do not experiments in which microbes are frozen into suspended animation, to be revitalized at will, change our ideas of biological time, and the meaning of death?

In order to reveal the basis and extent of these emendations, it is relevant perhaps to begin with an inspection of life and death among man's evolutionary forebears.

The first inhabitants of our planet were not subject to death. As single cells, they grew until reaching a fixed size limit, then divided in two, leaving no parent—and no corpse.

In the course of evolutionary time, organisms came to consist of many cells, the vast majority of which—relegated to subserve supportive and nutritive functions—were shorn of their original capacity to reproduce the whole organism. Further division of labor occurred; and as millions of years rolled on, the cellular constituency of advancing organisms became highly diverse and astronomically large. There were tissues which served to digest food for the entire organism; others specialized to deliver nutriment to every cranny of the body; still others assigned for integration and courier detail, for locomotion, excretion, protection. But ever secluded and sheltered within each organism were the precious germinal cells, waiting but to pass on the species, ere the body died.

Motivation for the epical developments which comprise what we know as organic evolution, lay in the fact that multicellular animals had long since abandoned sunlight as the source of primary energy, and so were impelled to sharpen their efficiency in the capture and devouring of their evolutionary collaterals. The whole "aim" and "purpose" of the outer body was to nurture and protect its wards—the reproductive cells—and to deposit them, when ripe, for fusion with those of the opposite sex.

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In life's two-billion year reaction chain, no value was assigned to post-reproductive maintenance of the individual organism. The diversity and survival-fitness of evolving species were enhanced by this generation-to-generation scheme, this life-death-life-death pattern, since in the mixing of mutated genes during fertilization, offspring differing from either parent were produced. Only those individuals whose constitutions enabled them to cope with endless geological and environmental shifts on the planet, survived to pass their valuable new gene combinations into the main stream of the species' germ plasm. Thus, survival of the evolving species, not of the single being, was the preeminent goal of animal evolution. The institution of death arose as a result of this null value placed on the individual once it had passed on the family torch.

Senescence and death are by no means universal biological phenomena; they are but the price paid for high specialization and for an advanced evolutionary position. Perennial organisms, for example, are in fact not subject to senescence, and never wear down to natural expiration. This condition prevails, presumably, because the body tissues of such organisms have not been specialized to the point where they have wholly lost their reproductive capacity. A single mangrove sprout may spread to a continuous net over many square miles of brackish swampland, its indefinite increase being limited only by competing vegetation or other environmental restrictions. Perennialism applies, in addition, not only to such notable examples of nonaging as the giant sequoias, but to the teeming bacteria, fungi and algae; and also to many of the lower multicellular animals which grow and bud very much like plants. Among organisms of this class, life can be stopped (as it is most often) only by accident, attack by preying organisms, or severe environmental adversity.

The life-span of those higher organisms whose body cells have lost their species-reproduction capacity, always begins with the activation of a previously dormant egg cell, and continues from birth to death in a series of intergrading growth stages. No known consciousness of self exists in the embryo, which is parasitic on the mother (as in mammals), or dependent on a store of yolk which the mother has provided for embryo nourishment (as in the egg-laying forms). Birth is usually associated with a release from this dependency, al-

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though in many animals, especially the mammals, a post-parturiency relationship persists for a considerable time.

Life's course after birth includes a progressive self-awareness, varying widely from species to species, and ostensibly reaching its highest expression in man. Concomitant with this "subjective" development, the organism becomes sexually mature, and sets out to repeat the life-cycle pattern of its parent-predecessors, employing perhaps half its total lifetime in reproductive activities aimed at species perpetuation. The body then progresses without choice through tissue degeneration into death.

The span allotted from birth to the onset of senescence of the body super-structure is gene-determined, and subject to wide species variation. A tiny animal called the rotifer completes its entire cycle within a few days, during this period having passed on its undying germ cells. The mouse does not age and die until one to two years have elapsed; some reptiles live to exceed a hundred and fifty years; and the elephant's longevity is proverbial. Moreover, there is no apparent relationship between the size of an organism and its life expectancy. A man is smaller than a cow, yet lives much longer. The parrot's normal span may approach the human three-score-and-ten.

Of course not all, indeed very few such death-destined individuals realize their full life-potential, which for most mammals is calculated to be about six times the period from birth to maturity. The nature of the competitive biological milieu is such that mishap, nutritional deficiency, or invasion by predatory microbes usually terminates life long before true old age has set in. In man, these factors have been considerably minimized, making the "sere and yellow leaf" stage all the more conspicuous. Perhaps half of civilized man's total personal activities—accident avoidance, food consumption, rest, hygiene, medical therapy, etc.—are aimed at deferring death.

The non-perennial organism which ages and finally dies when the life-potential has dissipated itself, may well be compared to a clock which stops ticking once the spring tension fails. But spring tension alone does not determine the life-span, for the *rate* of a clock's ticking obviously fixes the speed at which its spring energy is spent. This applies analogously to the organism.

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Since the speed of "ticking" within the body is broadly conditioned by the temperature at which it occurs, thermal changes may alter the life-span. Fruit flies maintained from birth at 30 degrees centrigrade go into senescence within 21 days; at 10 degrees centigrade they do not succumb to old age and natural death until almost 200 days have elapsed. Moreover, temperature affects not only the length of the life-cycle; it changes markedly the organism's subjective sense of time. Insects, for example, when fed at a set hour each day become conditioned and will anticipate feeding by arriving punctually at the trough. If the temperature of the environment is raised, they come too early; if lowered, too late.

Immediately one wonders why the Eskimo and, say, the desert Bedouin do not show high discrepancy in their time senses, or indeed why the former does not vastly outlive the latter. The answer is clearly that mammals possess an efficient internal regulating system which, irrespective of external temperature, maintains the inside fires burning at a constant rate. Insects, again, lacking thermostats—like all other animals except mammals and birds—tend to adopt the temperature of the air around them. It is interesting to note that when something goes wrong with the human thermostat, as in fever, the time sense is completely upset, and events race crazily.

We have said that the rate of metabolic "ticking" determines the length of time during which a given life-potential is expended, and that this rate is to a considerable degree fixed by the temperature at which the body chemistry functions. Improving on the experiment with the fruit flies, could we not reduce the internal temperature of higher animals to a point where the life-span could be increased indefinitely, or at least suspended? Happily or unhappily, this is not possible at the present state of the biological art. The delicately balanced organ and tissue relationships within the mammalian body are such that a drop in internal temperature of only a few degrees is quickly fatal.

But among the non-mammalian species some suggestive experiments have been performed—spectacularly successful among very low species, disappointing among creatures even as high as the insects. The research and interpretation of Basile Luyet explains why. If protoplasm is frozen by ordinary means, there develop tiny

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water crystals which, sharp and angular, cause irreparable damage to fragile structural arrangements within the cell. On the other hand, if freezing is accomplished so rapidly and to so low a temperature that ice crystals do not have a chance to form, protoplasm assumes a vitreous or non-crystalline condition.

This vitreous state is achieved by rapid immersion of the material into liquid nitrogen (195 degrees below zero centigrade) or some similar low-temperature fluid. Essential to the procedure is that the transition from normal temperature to that of vitrification be instantaneous; and that in thawing, the change be equally rapid. Present techniques do not allow such lightning thermal shifts in any but microscopic organisms, undoubtedly because of the longer time required for heat transference in large masses of cellular material. Thus, only the viruses, bacteria, protozoa, and some of the smallest multicellular animals have been successfully vitrified, and thereby transmuted into a state of passive immortality. The platform demonstrator who re-vivifies a "frozen" fish would find with a little dissection that only the outer scales were actually frozen.

Of profound significance is the possibility of vitrifying spermatozoa, and perhaps even ova, for perpetual storage. This has actually been accomplished in the case of spermatozoa, although the technique is not developed to the point where it has practical application. We may expect that in the not too distant future, vitrified sperm banks will be employed in animal husbandry. The implications of their use in human euthenics are breathtaking. . . .

More directly cogent than thermal manipulation to the problems of aging and death is the plausibility of somehow altering the spring which lies coiled to a predetermined tension within every individual of every non-perennial species. The tortoise drives ahead for more than a century; the human being for three-score-years-and-ten; the rotifer for only eight days. Is it not possible to identify the factors that preordain the shortness of individual existence, and perhaps to control them?

This question, asked so early in the Atomic Era, still seems unfortunately to connote fantasy. Obviously, we cannot yet supply a complete or even a satisfactory answer. On the other hand, we may infer from the absence of inevitable death among the lower organisms

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that there is nothing in the fundamental nature of protoplasm that demands a wearing-out. A man is protoplasm; a sequoia is protoplasm. One has a death-terminated life-cycle; the other does not. A man is a mammal; so is a mouse. Yet one lives thirty times longer than the other.

Many crude attempts have been made to probe the human aspects of such gerontic enigmas. The elixir of life has prayerfully been sought in glandular therapy, connective tissue extract treatment, reduction of bacterial toxins within the body, nutritional manipulation, and so on—but vainly, for such gropings have been based on the shaky premise that senility is due to the break-up of a single tissue or physiological system. Current physiological intelligence indicates that true aging derives not from the wearing-out of a single body unit, but rather from an over-all deterioration genetically intrinsic to the physiological organization of each species.

One would expect a more fruitful approach to the problem of man's mortality to lie in a further quest for fundamental knowledge of the nature of organ and system relationships within the body, and of the subtle genetic means by which they are influenced. Modern gerontologists are just beginning to look into such aspects of biochemistry as molecular degradation and synthesis, membrane permeability, energy exchange, dynamics of gene determinism—to list them all would constitute the outline of a physiology textbook. It does not require a seer's perception to realize that this class of phenomena will have to be elucidated far more fully before effective thought can be devoted to the challenge of obviating that deep-seated rusting which leads so inexorably to senescence and death. Perhaps in this inaugural age of science, man will begin to supplant his traditional but fading dream of life-after-death with a new and vigorous search for biological, and so psychological, immortality.

To those who would worry about the staggering implications of literal immortality, may one add, in genuflection, that there will be time enough to deal with that greatest of all challenges: the patterning of values, motivations and reproductive mores in a society whose citizens are assured perpetual life.

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Drouth

John Williams

The public drouth comes down,
The private field is narrow;
Spare grasses, parched and brown,
Fold beneath the harrow.

Now earth is raw and torn
Where iron teeth have mangled,
And stubbled crops, rough-shorn,
With weeds rot, earth-entangled.

The seasons' ruthless action
Cannot here invade:
Green, from this putrefaction,
Will rise the solvent blade.

JOHN WILLIAMS is associate editor of the Swallow Press in Denver. His first novel, *Nothing but the Night*, was published last year and his first book of poems, in which this one will appear, will be published late next summer. Mr. Williams is at work on a second novel.

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Woman of Ulster

DeLancey Ferguson

SHE STOOD full four feet eleven in her flat-heeled shoes, and looked remarkably like Queen Victoria. A widow like the Queen, she dressed always in black, in the style fashionable just after leg-of-mutton sleeves went out. How many layers of clothing underlay the surface black, only God and her dressing-table knew, but even with the most liberal discount for wrappings, it cannot be denied that she was plump.

I met her only three times, the last of them twenty years ago, but I have never forgotten her. In 1913 I was a callow youth, just out of college and taking my first trip to the British Isles. When I reached Ireland, I began to look up relatives, for my father came from County Down, and my mother was American-born of Londonderry parents. Frances Mathers Fullerton was my father's only surviving first cousin, and I found her at work as postmistress of the York Street Post Office in Belfast. York Street is not Belfast's Park Avenue, or Mayfair. Almost across the street from the post office were the great linen mills; a short walk leftward brought one to the reeking slum of Sandy Row, and to the right the streets led down to the docks and the shipyards. But Cousin Frances' little flat above the post office was a model middle-class, late-Victorian home. The tables and whatnots in her living room were crowded with ornaments; the walls were thick with pictures. Apart from photographs of the late Mr. Fullerton, and of her daughter Lily, who had died in childhood, the pictures summed up her allegiances: the faces which appeared more than once were John Wesley, Disraeli, the Royal Family, and Sir Edward Carson.

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Ulster, that summer of 1913, was seething with agitation over the threat of Home Rule. Carson had coined the phrase, "Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right," and after listening to Cousin Frances for an evening I realized that the first half of the phrase, at any rate, was accurate. Such small attention as I had paid at college to the Irish Question had left me with the simple belief that England, under Asquith, was at last preparing to right a centuries-old wrong, and that the overwhelming majority of Irishmen, regardless of creed, wanted Home Rule. Cousin Frances was my first lesson in the great truth that Irishmen, like women and elephants, never forget; that for Ulster Protestants, William of Orange landed at Carrickfergus last month, and fought the Battle of the Boyne last week, instead of in 1690.

Listening to Frances, I heard in living speech a frame of mind, and a point of view, which previously I had encountered only in the gory pages of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. Speaking of a certain residential district in Belfast, she said, "Och, it used to be a nice neighborhood, but now the Caatholics are getting in." I had heard that phrase at home, but not applied to Roman Catholics. She was firmly convinced that all Catholics were deceitful, and were plotting to seize power and reestablish the Inquisition—talked of them, in short, as many Americans now talk of Communists. Woodrow Wilson had recently been elected, and she told me that she had heard that his private secretary was "a Jesuit of the deepest dye." I expostulated, mildly, that, though Joseph Tumulty was unquestionably a Roman Catholic, he was also a married man with eight children, and I thought that was carrying deception pretty far, even for a Jesuit. But she was still unconvinced.

With Frances, loyalty to King and Country was so inextricably bound up with loyalty to protestantism that she saw no incongruity in the Solemn League and Covenant by which Ulstermen were pledging themselves to use "all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule parliament in Ireland," and "to refuse to recognize its authority" were it established. Those means included preparation for armed resistance, but in the eyes of Frances and her fellow Covenanters, if the civil war came, it would be Asquith and the London Parliament, not the

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Ulstermen, who would be the rebels and traitors. Ulster would be right, precisely as Scotland and the Roundheads were right in resisting the alleged "Papist" leanings of Charles I and Archbishop Laud. Looking at the saturnine features of her portrait of Disraeli, Frances said, feelingly, "If *he* were alive, there'd be no more talk of breaking up the Empire!" And to her, Sir Edward Carson was the true successor to Cromwell and William of Orange.

Her loyalty to protestantism was far more than political. It colored her entire life. If she ever mentioned what her husband's business had been, it was so briefly that I have forgotten it. His central interest had been his work as a Methodist lay-preacher, conducting open-air services on the custom house steps on Sunday afternoons. Now that he was gone, all Frances' spare time and energy—she had abundance of the latter, however much her official duties might cut into the former—were devoted to the service of the Methodist congregation of Grosvenor Hall. Yet when Sunday came, she would not let me go to Grosvenor Hall with her. She said—rightly, I'm sure—that I wouldn't care for the service, and packed me off instead to the Anglican cathedral.

Belfast and Grosvenor Hall were her world. I had just come from Londonderry and the Giant's Causeway, but she had never seen them—her farthest excursion from York Street had been an occasional summer trip to Donaghadee at the mouth of Belfast Lough. Within her little world of the post office and the church, she might have been called a dictator, but it was benevolent dictatorship. She was utterly sure of the rightness and completeness of her moral code, and since neither the code nor her enforcement of it was ever swayed by fear, favor or caprice, you knew exactly where you stood, and what she expected of you. No girl clerk in the office dared use cosmetics on the premises, or appear, even in summer, in a short-sleeved frock. Yet the girls respected and admired her; when they left to marry, or to take other jobs, most of them made a point of coming back to visit her and of sending her remembrances at Christmas. And the customers shared the clerks' respect. Belfast dockers and shipyard workers bear a well-earned reputation for toughness, but even the roughest-necked customer minded his manners when he talked to Mrs. Fullerton. Though I recognized, and shared, the

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respect in which Frances was held, I am afraid that the main impression I bore away from that first visit to her was an amused affection, mingled with a wholly new realization of the nature of Irish protestantism.

When I saw Frances again, World War I had come and gone. It was 1921; civil war was still raging in the South, and when I landed at Larne my baggage was politely but efficiently searched for concealed weapons. Frances was still in her little flat over the post office, though she was nearing eighty, and was planning to retire at the end of the year. York Street had had its share in what some of the Irish now euphemistically describe as "the time of the crossness," and of that rioting I shall tell one episode a little later. But, like all civil disturbances, this one had given new opportunities for criminal enterprise.

One evening in the previous winter, Frances had been alone in the office. It closed at eight, and five minutes before the hour she was setting things in readiness, and making up her accounts. A man with his cap pulled over his eyes entered, pushing the outer door almost shut behind him, so that a casual passerby might think the office already closed. When Frances turned to serve him, he produced a pistol, saying, in properly hard-boiled tones, "Hand over that money in your till." Frances straightened to her full height of four-eleven, and her blue eyes must have regained some of their youthful fire. "I'll do no such thing," she said. "And don't you dare talk to me like that!"

That was unorthodox conduct in the face of a pointed gun. It upset the gunman pretty badly. He couldn't reach the till from his side of the counter, and Frances was being no help at all. He tried to bluster, and got nowhere. Then a sound from the back room, where one of the clerks had lingered over her preparations for going home, converted his bluster into panic. He whipped out through the door, and ran. A week later, Frances identified him in a police line-up, and heard him sentenced to a long term for other robberies under arms in which his victims had been more cooperative.

That unrehearsed defense of government funds was a fitting climax to a term of service during which no inspector ever found a penny

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wrong with Frances' books. When I next saw her, in the autumn of 1928, she was living on her pension in the exquisite discomfort of a British suburban villa on the outskirts of the city. Our relations at first were slightly strained, because I had recently edited a volume of Burns's poems, and had rashly sent her a copy. She had never read Burns, and looking through the table of contents, had pitched first upon "Holy Willie's Prayer," because the title sounded devout. Her indignation was impartially divided between Burns, for writing the poem, and me, for reprinting it.

At tea, however, her indignation gave way to motherly concern. As she began to pour that black and potent beverage which the Irish call by the name that Americans apply to a lukewarm infusion of filter paper, I said, "Make mine weak, please." With a pitying glance, she added about a tablespoonful of hot water to the cup, and handed it to me. After a sip or two, I had to reach for the hot-water jug. Her pity became vocal. "Och," she said. "Poor boy! Poor boy!"

Convinced that I was hastening into a decline, she produced a bottle of ginger wine tonic, and poured me a stiff glass. Being a Methodist, she was naturally a teetotaler, but she was not the first Methodist who has welcomed the Demon Rum into the house in medicinal guise. It was the Prohibition Era in America, and that ginger tonic would have rated a citation from Al Capone. Fortunately, she was called from the room while I was drinking it, and I managed to dispose of the last half of the glass in a flowerpot. I have often wondered what finally happened to that aspidistra.

On Saturday evening, I committed another *gaff:* I mentioned the pleasure I had been getting from the Sunday *Observer*, particularly from the "Torquemada" crossword puzzles. Frances was, as usual, abrupt and direct. "There's never been a Sunday newspaper in my house, and never will be as long as I'm alive." Next day, when I had been sent, as usual, to the cathedral, there was a certain childish thrill about smuggling the staid *Observer* into the house, under my raincoat, and later working on Torquemada in the privacy of my room, and not forgetting to hide the paper in my suitcase before I went downstairs.

Though she was wearing to ninety, Frances' vigor was unabated, and her opinions were unaltered. She had no girl clerks to keep in

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order now, but she found plenty of other outlets. For instance, when short dresses had first come into style, Frances found herself on a crowded tram, facing a young wearer of the then New Look. In tones audible to every passenger she said, "Pull down your skirts!" Her victim, she reported contentedly, left the tram at the next stop. She quoted with relish the Unionist quip about the three eras of Irish history—the Pagan Era, the Christian Era, and the De Valera. She also confided, darkly, that there was sad gossip going round about Cathie, a distant relative and an artist suspected of Nationalist leanings. (Frances never knew how strong those leanings were: one of Cathie's most cherished possessions was an autograph poem by Padraic Pearse, one of the victims of the Easter Week Rebellion of 1916.) Cathie, it seemed, had actually spent a week-end with a Roman Catholic family; it was even whispered that she had accompanied her hosts to Mass. "If her poor mother knew that that was being said about Cathie, she'd turn in her grave. Not," Frances loyally added, "that I believe it myself. Cathie, the creature, was always a reckless one, but I'm sure she was too well brought up ever to do a thing like that."

Frances died at the age of ninety-three, energetic and stubbornly righteous to the last. But of all the instances of her stubborn righteousness, the one I remember oftenest is what happened in York Street during the rioting in 1920. Belfast mobs shared in "the crossness," looting and burning Roman Catholic shops and homes. One evening a mob gathered in York Street with the intention of burning out a Catholic family who lived two or three doors from the post office. It was not an occasion for little old ladies to be in the street, but Frances, when she heard what was brewing, put on her coat and bonnet and forced her way through the crowd.

Confronting one of the leaders, she demanded, "Do you know who I am?" The man doffed his cap. "Indeed we know you, Mrs. Fullerton, and nobody's going to hurt a hair of your head. It's these Papists we're after." Frances Fullerton set her back to the door of the threatened house. "These Papists are my neighbors. They're decent, peaceable people, and they've done you no harm. What you do to them you do to me. Unless you let them be, I'll stay here till I'm removed by force."

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There were angry mutterings on the fringes of the crowd, but none in its center. For a long minute the leader hesitated. Then he turned to his followers. "All right, boys; we'll call it off, since Mrs. Fullerton says so. Let's give her a cheer, and see her safe in her own door." The cheer was given with fervor, and slowly the mob dispersed, cowed, like the gunman, by a spirit too great for them to cope with.

St. Peter, Keeper of the Keys, is the titular founder of the Church of Rome. But if he were at the Gate when Frances presented herself, I doubt that he raised any denominational quibbles. He, of all the Saints, would be the promptest to recognize the Church Militant.

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The Weather Forecast

Cleve Hallenbeck

DURING my thirty-four years in the U. S. Weather Bureau, hardly a year passed that I did not bid farewell to some veteran forecaster who was retiring and leaving his work to younger men. And each one's *envoi* to his successors ended on a note of frustration and defeat. The natural pessimism of age, I thought for a while: no man ever achieves all he has hoped for. But when, finally, it came my turn to leave the stage, I was no different from the rest.

Improving the accuracy of the forecasts has been, and still is, the dominant aim of every weather service in the world. Reward awaits him who can even suggest some new and plausible line of attack. Scores of able scientists have devoted their lives to that end. And what has it all been worth? The *science of meteorology* has made notable forward strides during the last half-century, but the practical application of that science, the *art of forecasting*, remains where it was fifty years ago.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the forecasts of our weather bureau, as officially gauged, were not less than 85 per cent accurate. They are not better than that today. The general average has hovered around 85 per cent for half a century or longer.

That official average, as I shall show presently, is somewhat padded. But even a genuine average of 85 per cent is not satisfactory. It means that there are three chances in twenty that the forecast will

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fail entirely; three chances in ten that half of it will go wrong; three chances in five that it will fail to score 100 per cent accuracy.

Where anything of consequence is involved, the individual cannot afford to take so large a risk as this. The irrigating farmer cannot afford to suspend irrigation just because the forecast calls for rain; the western fruit-grower, with his trees in blossom and his orchard-heaters distributed, cannot afford to risk being caught offguard by a freeze, whatever the forecast may say; the trucker, starting off with a truckload of perishable vegetables, must still go equipped to protect them from any weather and temperature extremes that are possible for the time of year. To the average layman, the factor of uncertainty is so large that the official forecast is little if any better than no forecast at all. A verification average of 85 per cent is not 85 per cent as good as one of 100 per cent would be. It is not one-twentieth as good. Similarly, an average of 90 per cent is more than 5 per cent better than one of 85 per cent. It is 33 per cent better, for it reduces the element of uncertainty by one-third.

I have said that the official average of 85 per cent is padded. To explain: for forecasting purposes, the twenty-four-hour period is divided into two twelve-hour intervals (tonight and tomorrow), and the forecast embraces the two elements, weather and temperature changes. Thus the forecast is divided into four parts: weather tonight, weather tomorrow, temperature changes tonight, and temperature changes tomorrow. On any one forecast the forecaster will score zero, 25 per cent, 50 per cent, 75 per cent or 100 per cent success.

I do not know whether any changes have been made in the rules of verification during the last seven years, for such information is not given to the public, and I now am one of the public. But presumably there has been no change, for none was made during my entire period of service.

Now, if rain is predicted, a mere trace (a single drop, in fact) is sufficient to verify the forecast. But if fair weather is called for, .02 inch of rain (or its equivalent in snow) must fall to defeat the forecast, and .02 inch is enough to drip freely from eaves. In fact, a thin drizzle may continue for half a day without totaling .02 inch of water. Similarly, if colder or warmer is called for, a twenty-four-

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hour change of only two degrees in the right direction is sufficient; but if the forecast calls for "little change in temperature," it requires an eight-degree change in summer, ten degrees in spring and fall, and twelve degrees in winter, to defeat that forecast.

It is possible, then, for each of two entirely different forecasts for the same day and locality to be verified. If one, for example, calls for "fair tonight and tomorrow with little change in temperature," and the other for "rain and colder tonight and tomorrow," it is easily possible for each to score 100 per cent. Such deception is unworthy of a scientific institution. In my own case, it gave me a batting average about 3 per cent higher than I would have received under any proper system of grading.

Moreover, the official rating is greatly boosted by periods of fair, equable weather. A standing forecast, for every day of the year, of "fair with little change in temperature" would score 75 per cent to 95 per cent, depending upon the part of the country involved. For a great majority of the days are fair, with no large changes in temperature. An equally high score can be attained by forecasting for the ensuing twenty-four hours a continuation of the kind of weather we are having today. Many forecasters allow this fact to influence their predictions when the element of doubt is larger than usual.

But it is *changes* in the weather, and marked changes in temperature, of which the average individual most desires to be advised—and in foretelling changes, especially changes from fair to rainy and from rainy to fair, the percentage of accuracy is quite low. I doubt that, for the country as a whole, forecasts of rain and snow are accurate half the time. In my best year, with an average score of 88.5 per cent, only 46 per cent of my rain forecasts hit the mark. In my locality, for the year 1947, the official rain forecasts were accurate only 32 per cent of the time, and a majority of the rains and snows that occurred came on fair weather forecasts.

The prediction of large temperature changes is equally difficult, especially in the diversified topography of the West. Last winter, for the first time in thirteen years, a cold wave was correctly forecast for my vicinity. One or more cold waves occurred each winter, and one or more cold wave warnings were issued each winter; yet, with that one exception, every cold wave arrived without warning other

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than the often-used forecast of "colder," and sometimes without even that. I might add that for the first six of those thirteen years I myself was doing the forecasting.

I mean no disparagement of the forecaster: I mean only that, in many parts of the country, the thing cannot be done. The vagaries of the Western cold wave, for example, have thus far proved insoluble. In the Eastern states, where blizzards are more inclined to obey the rules, a better record is achieved, but even there the percentage of error is discouragingly high. And how many hurricanes follow the routes laid down in the forecasts? Not one in three.

We may look at weather forecasting from yet another angle. One can *guess* at the weather for tomorrow, and the mathematics of probability will give one 50 per cent accuracy. If a man possesses some knowledge of local weather signs and of the usual sequence of weather conditions, he can boost his grade to 75 per cent or better. I have known old-timers, long resident in one locality, who could score 80 per cent on a year's test, or within a few points of the official forecaster.

In some districts, rain occasionally can be forecast with the *certainty* that it will occur. For most of the country, this is not true. Not once in twenty-six years, in my locality, was I able to say with certainty that rain would occur within the period covered by the forecast. Only eleven times in the twenty-six years were the chances of rain as high as nine out of ten, and not five times a year were the chances higher than three out of five.

With this fact in mind, I introduced into my forecasts what since has been called "the confidence factor," which stated the probability of rain in percentages. Thus, the statement that "the probability of rain is 45 per cent" meant that forty-five times in one hundred, or nine times in twenty, the then existing type of weather map would produce rain in my locality within the next thirty-six hours. It was mainly a statistical forecast, based upon the number of occasions on which rain had resulted from each of eighty-four types of weather maps.

Though vigorously criticized by some of my colleagues, this form of forecast became popular among my clientele, who thereby knew just what chances they were taking with the weather. Such opera-

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tions as spraying and alfalfa cutting were suspended when the probability of rain was as high as 50 per cent, for a rain would wash off the spray and would ruin cut alfalfa. But irrigation was not stopped unless the probability of rain was greater than 65 per cent, for the average rain was not sufficient to take the place of an irrigation. And so it varied, through every activity that was directly affected by the weather. Since there is an element of uncertainty in a majority of the forecasts issued, the public should be advised of its magnitude. To illustrate further: for a total of about 225 days of the year, fair weather is predicted. The public knows that rain or snow not infrequently comes on a fair weather forecast; therefore, to them there is an element of uncertainty in *every* such forecast. Yet there are about 150 occasions during the year when fair weather for the morrow can be foretold with absolute certainty. Why not give the public the benefit of this assurance?

A discouraging fact is that the most learned meteorologist is frequently not the most proficient forecaster. In other fields, the specialist who is most thoroughly grounded in his science is also highly proficient in the practical application of that science. But this is not so in meteorology. Top-grade meteorologists may make only a mediocre showing in foretelling the weather. A general knowledge of the physics of the atmosphere is of course essential, but some of the best forecasters have been those whose knowledge of meteorological science was no more than that which might be acquired in a high school course.

During my career, I saw one promising avenue after another open up, only to prove a *cul-de-sac*. The latest was the "polar front theory," along with "air mass analysis" in its application. This theory, brought forward by V. Bjerknes of the Norwegian Weather Service, marked a long forward stride in meteorology and gave great promise of improving, or even revolutionizing, methods of forecasting. But, although it has been under test in this country for more than ten years, it has thus far failed to raise the accuracy of weather predictions 1 per cent.

Moreover, the airplane, the pilot balloon, and the radiosonde now enable the Weather Bureau to obtain data on upper air conditions simultaneously with observations of conditions near the ground. In

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other words, the weather map now is practically three-dimensional. This fact also held out promise of improving the accuracy of forecasting, but to date it has yielded no appreciable benefits to any industry other than commercial aviation. To the man on the ground, the weather forecast is as uncertain as ever.

During my twenty-six years of forecasting, my batting average rose about 4 per cent. A miserable showing—only one-sixth of 1 per cent per year. Nevertheless, it was an advance, and I attribute it not to my keeping abreast of new developments in meteorology, but to my accumulating experience in forecasting for one limited area, and my patient search for ultimate factors that affected the weather of this particular region. These factors often were so remote, in time or in distance, that only long experience revealed them. At that, I probably did not discover the tenth part of the "remote controls" of the local weather.

I am convinced that the only way in which any appreciable improvement in the accuracy of weather forecasts can be attained is to assign each forecaster to a limited territory of not more than 10,000 square miles, *and keep him there*. He should have a younger understudy, and upon his death or retirement, this understudy should succeed him and be given an understudy of his own. Thus each forecaster would acquire the accumulated weather wisdom of all his predecessors.

As forecasting is done at present, there are a few "district" forecasters, each district embracing several states. Forecasts are issued for each state separately, but for no area smaller than a state. Then, at each of the more important stations, there is a "local" forecaster, who prepares forecasts for only a limited area around his station. I had forecasting authority for an area of about 12,000 square miles—much larger than usually is assigned to a local forecaster.

Now it is a significant fact that the local forecaster must make a higher grade for his locality than does the district official for his: otherwise he will be deprived of his forecasting authority. This is a virtual concession that a man on the ground, even when comparatively new to the work, can do a better job than one some distance removed.

I do not mean to decry the value of our weather service to certain

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interests. Commercial aviation, for instance, profits greatly; a pilot, as a rule, needs a forecast for only the next few hours, along with information on flying conditions immediately ahead. At all important airports a fresh weather map is available every six hours, and he is a poor forecaster who cannot score 95 per cent or better on six-hourly predictions. But for the general public, the forecast still is for a twenty-four-hour period beginning, not with the hour of the weather map, but twelve hours later. In other words, the map already is twelve hours old before forecasts based on it are in force.

Notwithstanding all the devices man has contrived to protect himself and his property from injurious weather and temperature conditions, accurate forecasting never before has assumed the economic importance it holds today. Never before has so large a percentage of the people interested themselves in meteorology as now. Even in the humblest outdoor tasks—putting out a washing, hoeing the garden, planting seeds, planning a picnic, going fishing—people would profit greatly through *knowing* what the weather held in store.

But weather forecasting remains what it always has been, a form of expert advice. No kind of expert advice is infallible. All that can be said of it, and therefore all that can be said of weather forecasting, is that the specialist is more likely to be right than the layman.

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American Scholar Forum . . .

NATIONAL INTEREST AND MORAL PRINCIPLES IN FOREIGN POLICY

The Primacy of the National Interest

Hans J. Morgenthau

OUR FOREIGN POLICY is bipartisan in that it is supported by the great majority of Congress, regardless of party affiliation. This is a good thing; for it eliminates from the conduct of American foreign affairs the spirit of party which tends to oppose and frustrate the policies of the administration for no other reason than that it is this particular administration which pursues them. The bipartisan foreign policy is, however, not an unmixed blessing. Making united support of whatever foreign policy is being pursued an end in itself discourages the development of, and popular support for, alternative policies; and it puts upon dissent the stamp of obstructionism, if not of something approaching disloyalty. This tendency toward a kind of voluntary *Gleichschaltung* in foreign affairs is aggravated by the unfortunate fact that popular alternatives to official policies have in the main been developed by groups at the extreme left which, to quote the remarkable understatement of one of their members, "do not discriminate against Communists."

However unhealthy this state of affairs may be, it is not the crux of the matter. What is really disquieting (because it reflects a general confusion as to what foreign policy is all about) is the level on which the discussion between the supporters of the bipartisan foreign policy and its critics proceeds. The level of discussion is that of moral generalities. The bipartisan policies are defended in terms of containment of communism, of the defense and promotion of democracy, freedom and the rights of man, of aid to the needy and oppressed. They are attacked in terms of imperialism and capitalist exploitation. The only question which is relevant is raised, but by im-

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plication or in subordination to others, and the one standard of evaluation which ought to override all others is applied only to supplement and strengthen standards of a moral kind. I am referring to the question of what the effect of a certain policy is likely to be upon the national interest, and I am referring to the national interest as the standard of evaluation for foreign policies planned and pursued.

Moral principles and the national interest have contended for dominance over the minds and actions of men throughout the history of the modern state system. The conduct of American foreign affairs in particular has from its very beginning been deeply affected by the contest between these two principles of political action. Perhaps never before or after have the practical alternatives which flow from these two principles been stated with greater acumen and persuasiveness than in the Pacificus articles of Alexander Hamilton, and it is for the light which Hamilton's arguments shed upon our problem—as well as for the analogy between the situation to which they apply and some of the situations with which American foreign policy must deal in our time—that we might dwell at some length upon the situation which gave rise to the Pacificus articles, and upon the philosophy which they express.

In 1792 the War of the First Coalition had ranged Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Great Britain and the United Netherlands against revolutionary France, which was tied to the United States by a treaty of alliance. On April 22, 1793, Washington issued a Proclamation of Neutrality, and it was in defense of that proclamation that Hamilton wrote the Pacificus articles. Among the arguments directed against the Proclamation were three derived from moral principles. Faithfulness to treaty obligations, gratitude toward a country which had lent its assistance to the colonies in their struggle for independence, and the affinity of republican institutions, were cited to prove that the United States must side with France. Against these moral principles, Hamilton invoked the national interest of the United States:

> There would be no proportion between the mischiefs and perils to which the United States would expose themselves, by embarking in the war, and the benefit which the nature of their stipulation aims at securing to France, or that which it would be in their power actually to render her by becoming a party.
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> This disproportion would be a valid reason for not executing the guaranty. All contracts are to receive a reasonable construction. Self-preservation is the first duty of a nation; and though in the performance of stipulations relating to war, good faith requires that its ordinary hazards should be fairly met, because they are directly contemplated by such stipulations, yet it does not require that extraordinary and extreme hazards should be run. . . .
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> The basis of gratitude is a benefit received or intended which there was no right to claim, originating in a regard to the interest or advantage of the party on whom the benefit is, or is meant to be, conferred. If a service is rendered from views relative to the immediate interest of the party who performs it, and is productive of reciprocal advantages, there seems scarcely, in such a case, to be an adequate basis for a sentiment like that of gratitude. . . . It may be affirmed as a general principle, that the predominant motive of good offices from one nation to another, is the interest or advantage of the nation which performs them.
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> Indeed, the rule of morality in this respect is not precisely the same between nations as between individuals. The duty of making its own welfare the guide of its actions, is much stronger upon the former than upon the latter; in proportion to the greater magnitude and importance of national compared with individual happiness, and to the greater permanency of the effects of national than of individual conduct. Existing millions, and for the most part future generations, are concerned in the present measures of a government; while the consequences of the private actions of an individual ordinarily terminate with himself, or are circumscribed within a narrow compass.
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> Whence it follows that an individual may, on numerous occasions, meritoriously indulge the emotions of generosity and benevolence, not only without an eye to, but even at the expense of, his own interest. But a government can rarely, if at all, be justifiable in pursuing a similar course; and, if it does so, ought to confine itself within much stricter bounds. . . . Good offices which are indifferent to the interest of a nation performing them, or which are compensated by the existence or expectation of some reasonable equivalent, or which produce an essential good to the nation to which they are rendered, without real detri-

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ment to the affairs of the benefactors, prescribe perhaps the limits of national generosity or benevolence. . . .

But we are sometimes told, by way of answer, that the cause of France is the cause of liberty; and that we are bound to assist the nation on the score of their being engaged in the defence of that cause. . . .

The obligation to assist the cause of liberty must be deduced from the merits of that cause and from the interest we have in its support.

The philosophy of this discussion provided the guiding principles of American foreign policy for more than a century. That philosophy has found expression in the *Federalist* and Washington's Farewell Address, no less than in many diplomatic documents. It was eclipsed by a conception of foreign policy whose main representatives were McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and Admiral Mahan. In that second period, moral principles were invoked side by side with the national interest to justify American expansion within and outside the Western hemisphere. Yet, as before with Gladstone's similar emphasis upon the moral obligations of British foreign policy, it so happened that by a felicitous coincidence what the moral law demanded of the United States was always identical with what its national interest seemed to require.

It is a distinctive characteristic of the third conception of American foreign policy, propounded by Woodrow Wilson, that this identity between the national interest and moral principles is consciously abandoned, and that the sacrifice of the national interest for compliance with moral principles is made the earmark of a worthy foreign policy. In his address at Mobile on October 27, 1913, Wilson declared: "It is a very perilous thing to determine the foreign policy of a nation in the terms of material interest. It not only is unfair to those with whom you are dealing, but it is degrading as regards your own actions. . . . We dare not turn from the principle that morality and not expediency is the thing that must guide us, and that we will never condone iniquity because it is most convenient to do so."

"Only a free people . . ." he said in his message of April 2, 1917, "prefer the interest of mankind to any interest of their own . . . . We have no selfish ends to serve . . . . We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind." And in his message of January 22, 1917, he had opposed "a peace that will serve the several interests and immediate aims of the nations engaged."

It stands to reason that no statesman in actual performance could have lived up to such principles without ruining his country. Whenever, therefore, Wilson had to apply these moral principles to situations, especially in the Western hemisphere, where the national interest was of long standing and well-defined, he applied them in actions which might as well have been justified in terms of the national interest. Where, however, the national interest was new and not yet clearly defined—as with regard to Europe at the end of the First World War—Wilson started with the assumption, which was a subtly isolationist one, that no specific national interest of the United States was affected by any particular settlement of European issues, and ended up with half-hearted, uneasy compromises between moral principles and the national interests of the more influential European states. Such compromises could not fail to shock the adherents of the Wilsonian principles, to disappoint the nations whose interests had not been fully satisfied, and to remain unintelligible to those sectors of the American public which, following the Federalist tradition of the national interest, had not been affected by the idealism of Wilson's "new diplomacy."

Thus the twenties witnessed a revival of the conception of the national interest, however erroneously defined. Under Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wilsonianism was revived in the foreign policy of Cordell Hull, while the President came closest to identifying the national interest with moral principles, the characteristic of the second period of American foreign policy. It is with the Truman Doctrine that a fourth conception of foreign policy has come to dominate the conduct of American foreign affairs. The Truman Doctrine is Wilsonian

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in that it proclaims universal moral principles—such as promotion of free and democratic governments everywhere in the world—as standards of American foreign policy. It is within the Federalist tradition in that it finds the containment of Russian power at some point required by the national interest. Yet, by defining that point in terms of its moral principles and not in those political and military terms which the national interest would demand, it vitiates its consideration of the national interest and cannot help being eclectic and immature as a philosophy, and half-hearted, contradictory and threatened with failure in actual operation.

Such must be the fate of any foreign policy which is not squarely founded upon the national interest. A foreign policy which is guided primarily by moral considerations is not only threatened with failure; it can be successful only by accident. It is also the supreme paradox of such a policy that it puts into jeopardy the very moral values which it intends to promote. There can be no successful foreign policy which cannot be justified by the national interest. There can also be no moral foreign policy which is at variance with the national interest. To a necessarily sketchy consideration of these propositions I shall proceed in the remainder of this paper.

The choice of ends and means of foreign policy is of necessity predetermined in a dual way: by the objectives to be promoted and by the power available for the pursuit of these objectives. Self-preservation being the primary objective of foreign policy, Canada's or Mexico's freedom from foreign influence is obviously of greater importance for American foreign policy than Poland's or Korea's. Yet the objectives of foreign policy cannot be chosen in view of their importance alone. A foreign policy, to be successful, must be commensurate with the power available to carry it out. American national interest requires an independent and strong China; but an American foreign policy pursuing that end is bound to operate within the strict limits set by the resources available for such a policy. Thus it is inevitable that political objectives of nations, as of individuals, are arranged in hierarchical order. There are those which must be pursued at all costs, for their attainment is indispensable for the national, or individual, existence and welfare. There are those which might be pursued under certain favorable circumstances. There are those which, however desirable in themselves, can never be pursued because they are beyond the reach of available strength.

No such considerations can be allowed to influence the mind of a statesman who takes moral principles for his guide. All objectives are equal before the moral law. If universal democracy is the standard of political action, Korea is as important as Mexico, China is as worthy an objective as Canada, and there is no difference between Poland and Panama. It is obvious that no statesman could pursue without discrimination such a policy of universal democracy without courting disaster; commitments would outrun resources, and failure would ensue. A foreign policy based upon a moral principle, which by definition relegates the national interest into the background (if it does not neglect it altogether) is of necessity a policy of national suicide, actual or potential. Yet the absurdity of a foreign policy based upon a moral principle illuminates the faultiness of the principle itself.

Now it is true that an individual may be required to sacrifice his interest and even his very existence for the sake of a moral principle, and here we touch the crux of our whole discussion. For moral principles for the individual members of a given national society are not the same as moral principles for nations in their relations each with the other. However extreme Hobbes's dictum that the state creates morality as well as law, and that there is neither morality nor law outside the state, that dictum points to an important and neglected truth. Universal moral principles, such as justice or equality, are applicable to concrete situations only in the measure in which they have been given content by society. What justice means in America I can say; for interests and convictions, experiences of life and institutionalized traditions, have in large measure created a con-

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sensus which tells me what justice means under the conditions of American society. Yet there is no society above national societies, comprehending all of them, and hence justice among the nations has no concrete universal meaning. Was it just that the Greeks should succumb to the Romans? Was it just that the white man should destroy the civilization of the American Indian? Was it just that Germany should rise and fall and rise and fall again in the scales of power?

No man could give answers to these questions which would be more than reflections of his own national preconceptions, for there are no standards at once concrete and universal enough to provide more than *ex parte* answers to such questions. The invocation of moral principles for the support of national policies, then, is always and of necessity a pretense. It may amount to the intoxication with world-embracing ideals which, because of their vagueness and generality, can provide no rational guidance to concrete political action. Or it may be the projection of national moral standards onto the international scene with a claim for universal recognition—a claim which, because of its particularity, finds no echo among the other nations.

The individual living in a national society can afford at times to subordinate his personal interests to moral principles of a supra-individual character. For not only do such principles exist, capable of providing concrete standards for individual action, but also there does exist a society which takes it upon itself to a greater or lesser degree to protect and promote the interests of the individual and, in particular, to guard his very existence against violence on the part of other members of society. It is at this point that what is euphemistically called the society of nations differs fundamentally from national societies. Not only are there no supra-national moral principles concrete enough to give guidance to the political actions of individual nations; there is also no agency on the international scene to protect and promote the interests of individual nations, and to guard their very existence, except the individual nations themselves. To say, then, that a nation should be guided by moral principles and not by the national interest is really tantamount to saying that a nation should be guided by a chimera and should commend the national interest, nay, its very existence, to the accidents of history or to the care of other nations.

The final refutation of the idea that foreign policy can be founded upon anything but the national interest derives from moral considerations. It is the ultimate paradox of a foreign policy subordinated to moral principles that it leads to the destruction of the very moral values which it seeks to live up to in its dealings with other nations. If a nation is able to escape the Scylla of national suicide, the threat of which is ever present in the emphasis upon moral principles to the neglect of the national interest, it is likely to fall into the Charybdis of the crusading spirit which is the great destroyer of morality among nations.

Respect for the existence and the individuality of its members is of the essence of the Western state system. To preserve them has been the main function of that system from the sixteenth century to our day. A nation which has made moral principles the mainstay of its foreign policy cannot be morally satisfied with, nor will it be politically capable of, seeing those principles prevail in its own policies while other nations are hostile to them. Both the universal claims of moral principles and considerations of political expediency make it imperative that such a nation seek the triumph of its moral principles throughout the world. Thus it must of necessity throw overboard that relativistic philosophy and tolerance of other political systems and policies based on different moral principles, which is the concomitant of policies based upon the national interest, and the precondition of a number of nations living side by side in mutual respect and peace.

On the contrary, it must pour into the general principles of morality its own national conception of them, and then try to impose those moral principles, universal in form and national in content, upon the rest of mankind with fire and sword. For

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you can compromise interests, but you cannot compromise principles, and in a world of sovereign nations there is no middle ground between compromise and war. Thus a foreign policy founded upon moral principles rather than the national interest issues, by its inner logic, into the tribalism of religious wars and of nationalistic crusades.

Lacking in that intellectual discipline and political self-restraint which are the beneficial by-products of the power calculations of a foreign policy based upon the national interest, the policy of moral principles chooses the whole world as its object to transform in the image of its own conception of morality. The fanaticism of the moral crusader enters into unholy wedlock with those potentially unlimited power drives which are latent in all men. Inevitably, then, a foreign policy which starts out as a crusade for universal liberty and democracy will end in a war to conquer the world. If it succeeds, it will build a world empire upon the radioactive ruins of civilizations, among which liberty and democracy may survive, at best, as words. If it fails, it will carry to destruction not only the moral values for the sake of which it had been undertaken, but also the nation pursuing such a course.

Between these two conceptions of foreign policy, the national interest and moral principles, there can be no compromise. For when the fundamental decisions of foreign policy are to be made, the statesman must make his choice between one or the other as the ultimate standard of decision. He can afford to be generous and idealistic, as Alexander Hamilton pointed out in the passage quoted above, as long as generosity and idealism are not likely to affect adversely the national interest. When a policy of generosity and idealism appears to be incompatible with the national interest, he must make up his mind and choose one or the other. A foreign policy which vacillates between these alternatives, a prisoner of its own propaganda and a slave to the popular passions which it has itself inflamed, will neither reap the benefits of the one nor avoid the pitfalls of the other.

The Reconciliation of the Desirable and the Possible

William T. R. Fox

CAN ONE successfully assert the irrelevance of "moral principle" to the conduct of foreign relations? This is what Professor Morgenthau says he is doing when he declares that "national interest" provides the sole valid criterion in making decisions in the field of foreign affairs.

A doctrine of this character will shock those many men of good will who believe the world is suffering from an excess of devotion to national interest rather than from the opposite. The doctrine will seem even more frightening to them because of the tone of pessimism which pervades the whole analysis. The casual reference to

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"those potentially unlimited power drives which are latent in all men" suggest that Power, Evil, and Original Sin are three names for the same thing, that the Kingdom of God is not to be brought down on this earth whatever we do, that peace on earth and good will to men is something to be sung about in Christmas carols and not to be translated into actuality.

The "men of little faith" have been the traditional objects of public scorn when things go amiss with the world. Professor Morgenthau instead turns his neo-Calvinist verbal artillery on the men of too great faith. It is perhaps time that they be put on the moral defensive. Serious students of politics will share with Professor Morgenthau a profound skepticism regarding any man whose faith in the virtue of his particular design for universal peace is so great that he would have us if necessary fight a third world war to make the Russians accept his plan.

There is a further difficulty. "Politics," says Max Weber, "is a slow boring of hard boards." Advocates of utopian programs almost invariably short-circuit the political process. Their faith in the virtue of a particular plan is buttressed by their faith in the possibility of its being put into effect. Whether a given utopian plan would be put into effect by threatening war or by making a series of dramatic concessions, its supporters generally propose to avoid the necessity for painful negotiation and for the hard intellectual analysis that accompanies such negotiation. But neither the avenging God of the Old Testament, who would have us deal harshly with His enemies, nor the merciful God of the New, who would turn the other cheek however great the provocation, can furnish the model for the responsible politician who abjures both holy war and fatuous gesture.

The demagogues of the Right and of the Left can afford to offer simple solutions. Their freedom to criticize is unlimited by any substantial prospect that they will come to power. There is little chance that they will be forced to demonstrate how much passion and how little dispassionate analysis entered into their program-making. Advocacy of one-way atomic war is not yet socially acceptable, but some of the more extreme Russophobes who call for firmness without patience only imperfectly conceal their anxiety to have the United States begin dropping atomic bombs. At the other extreme, are the protagonists of patience without firmness, of unlimited concession, of choking Stalin with kindness. Such a course of action may conceivably evoke a complete change in the hearts of the men of the Kremlin. But if it did not, and all available historical evidence suggests that it would not, the United States would then be under the necessity of opposing a Russia which it had materially strengthened.

The patient exploration of every avenue for peace and the day-by-day assessment of the country's security position are twin tasks which the responsible leader cannot escape. Neither can be performed simply by imposing on a refractory world some moral principle of universal applicability. But how shall he decide when to be firm and when to be conciliatory?

According to Professor Morgenthau, war is never necessary solely to uphold a moral principle; but one must always be prepared to make war when a fundamental national interest is involved. National interest turns out to be another name for national security, and this in its turn is revealed to mean the maintenance of the state's territorial integrity *and* its basic institutions. Now which institutions are basic? Can this question be answered except in the language of moral principle?

Here, it seems to me, is a basic flaw in Professor Morgenthau's choice of language. The flaw appears to me to be more in his choice of words than in his underlying analysis. He protests to vehemently his amorality. His uncompromising support of national interest as *the* guiding principle does not wholly conceal the moral foundations of his position.

"Respect for the existence and the individuality of its members is," he declares, "of the essence of the Western state system." This is the principle of live and let live. It is the democratic principle which

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recognizes the equal integrity and right of autonomous and full development of *other* personalities or groups. It is a principle which determines when one is to be unyielding and when compliant. It is a moral principle.

One is not bound absolutely to respect the existence and the individuality of every other member of the state system, but only so long as the actions of the other do not threaten the existence and the individuality of one's "self." (The "self" of which we are here talking, in a world politics context, is the nation-state.) Stated in concrete present-day terms, Red totalitarianism is all right in Russia, provided its existence there does not threaten the American national interest. It must, of course, be in the national interest to frustrate the policies of another state if that state's national interest were defined in terms which menaced that of one's own state. Therefore, only compatible national interests ought to be recognized.

Is the national interest of any given state capable of objective determination except in terms of some explicitly declared set of value preferences? The camel's nose of moral principle is already under the tent when one admits that it is territorial integrity *plus* basic institutions which must "in the national interest" be protected. By the time the responsible leader has taken the next step and decided which foreign policies of other powers are compatible with this national interest he will be consulting his conscience as well as his intellect.

We are sometimes told that a responsible statesman would recognize that there really is no such thing as national interest. Charles Beard denounced the whole idea of national interest as a pious fraud to cloak the internal struggle between the trade-hungry merchants and the land-hungry planters for control of United States foreign affairs. He could see only sub-national interests. But he rejected the idea of supra-national interest even more emphatically than he did the idea of national interest. It was only, he maintained, because the American people became infected with a sense of world mission, that they have in the twentieth century blundered into other peoples' wars. Thus, even he, in a negative sort of way recognized an American national interest—in avoiding taking sides in "other peoples' wars."

To Woodrow Wilson, on the other hand, is attributed the belief that formulation of policy in terms of national self-interest is wrong per se. Wilson undoubtedly believed that what was good for the world was good for the United States, and he believed that democracy, national self-determination and a world commonwealth of nations would together usher in the reign of universal peace. But he was quite as ready to outbuild Britain in a naval arms race to crush "British navalism" as he had been to lead the United States to victory over Prussian militarism. Wilson clearly understood the need for protecting what he believed to be American interests in a stubborn and imperfect world.

That Wilson, in the Fourteen Points and at Versailles, may have been mesmerized by his own skill in phrase-making—some think he had been earlier when he coined the phrase "too proud to fight"—is more than possible. The moral effect of solemn invocations of principle uttered by Cordell Hull was negated by his recurring explicit warning that the United States would assume no risk of war or of political or military involvement in defense of these principles. In our own decade the too sweeping phraseology of the Atlantic Charter and the Truman Doctrine have aroused unfulfillable expectations in many parts of the world. All these point to the undesirability of careless, irresponsible and unconditional invocation of moral principle.

The chief task of the policy-maker lies in the reconciliation of the desirable and the possible. Moral principle is *not* irrelevant, but it can provide by itself no sure guide to policy. It is in weighing the risks and the gains—the value losses and the value increments to the self in whose name one is acting, i.e., the nation-state—that judgments about the possible emerge. It is in formulating this judgment that one arrives at a conception of the national interest.

What is judged to be absolutely impos-

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sible is the pursuit of a policy which endangers the very existence of the nation-state itself. Such a policy will be rejected however imperative may appear the moral precept which gave rise to the policy. Thus if one arranges political objectives in hierarchical order, survival will take precedence over all the others. But it is not the survival of the individual, but of his state, for which the ultimate sacrifice of life is in our century ordinarily made. Stated in other language, the nation-state is the "survival self," but the self in whose name moral principle is invoked may be either broader or narrower in scope.

The applicability of moral principle in a situation threatening survival may be illustrated by an admittedly far-fetched example. The Truman Doctrine seems to promise American aid to freedom-loving peoples *everywhere* in the world against the forces which would impose on them tyranny, and especially Moscow-dominated tyranny. Let us suppose that it is freedom-loving but totally inaccessible Afghanistan which calls for help against an expansionist Soviet Union in accordance with that country's interpretation of the Truman Doctrine.

Is the Afghan claim for help any less valid because Afghanistan is so inconveniently located from the point of view of American capacity to help? It is not, and yet hardly anyone expects the United States to take great risk to support a prospective victim of aggression, especially if that victim is believed to be beyond the reach of its aid in any case. No distinction can be made between such a power and a near neighbor of the United States *solely* by reference to some moral principle of universal and unconditional applicability.

The difference between the Morgenthau position and my own is partly but not wholly verbal. He contends that policy must be based *either* on national interest *or* on moral principle. My own view is that moral principle necessarily enters into any valid formulation of national interest, which must itself reconcile the desirable and the possible. Against the view that there can be no compromise, I assert that there can be no escape from compromise. This is what makes politics a vocation only for the mature, for the responsible, for the man who does not despair when he discovers incommensurate values placed in such a juxtaposition that one or another has to be sacrificed.

It is this to which Alexander Hamilton had reference when he pointed to the "disproportion" between the risk to which strict fulfillment of the French Alliance would have exposed the United States and the advantages either to the United States or to France which would have flowed from American intervention in that European war. Then as now, treaty observance depended upon continuing mutuality of interest.

These things must be said if only because stability and responsibility in American foreign policy require that the American people not appear to themselves as more generous than they really are. Leadership in the United Nations, Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan are none of them exclusively the result of a developing sense of world citizenship in the United States or a manifestation of American belief in the brotherhood of man.

It was fear of the consequences for American security if Greece were overrun or if European recovery were longer delayed that has stimulated the military aid to Greece and the economic aid to Western Europe. The E.R.P. appears unselfish in a context in which material values alone are considered; but it is more correctly assessed as based on *mutual* interest, including the American national interest, once the non-material values of freedom and survival are also brought into the analysis.

If Americans persuade themselves that present aid to Western Europe, Greece and China is due primarily to American generosity, they may feel free to suspend that aid whenever they feel piqued about the behavior of one of the beneficiaries. A British decision to nationalize the steel industry or a Chinese decision to abandon the capital city to the Communists may disappoint the American people. If, however, they understand the self-interest which motivated the original aid, they will find

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that the threat to American security has increased, and that pique is a luxury which not even the American people can afford in a crisis. Nor will the American people, resentful because they were oversold in 1945 as to the benefits which would flow from United Nations membership, abandon that organization of substantial though not unlimited utility.

That the American national interest seems to be in so little conflict with the interests of the other powers on the outer side of the Iron Curtain is fortunate indeed. It shows that the national interest of the United States is in our time formulated in terms which can be supported by any other power whose diplomatic watchword is "live and let live."

In the Summer Number . . .

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM

will be devoted to an extensive consideration of

Communism and Academic Freedom

with a special reference to the recent dismissal of three members of the faculty of the University of Washington. The Forum will contain a brief factual résumé taken from the Faculty Committee's and the President's reports on the case, a statement by President Raymond B. Allen of the University of Washington, and three articles on the general subject of the FORUM by qualified contributors, including Max Lerner and T. V. Smith. The three professors who have been dismissed will also be given an opportunity to contribute statements.

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The Reader Replies . . .

The Reader Replies *regularly carries comments by readers on the contents of the preceding American Scholar Forum. In the Summer number, for example,* The Reader Replies *will contain letters about the debate in the current number on the subject: "National Interest and Moral Principles in Foreign Policy." In addition, miscellaneous letters of comment on various articles appear in this department. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *5 East 44 Street, New York 17, N. Y., and should not exceed 300 words in length. Hitherto, we have not refused to print longer comments, but the volume of letters has increased to such a degree that it is now necessary to insist on the 300 word maximum. The only exceptions will be comments on the previous Forum. Because of limitations of space, the editors cannot guarantee to print all communications received. Letters intended for publication in the Summer number should be mailed before March 20. (Editor)*

DO SPIRITUAL VALUES REQUIRE A THEOLOGICAL BASIS?

Rebuttal

I should thank Dean Myers a little more heartily for his lucid lesson in right thinking metaphysics, had I not heard the piece often before. There are certain points to his sermon that, perhaps because they are stated with unusual clarity, seem to me even less convincing than usual. I find it impossible to agree that without a belief in the existence of a rational god it is impossible to believe that there are recurrences and uniformities in nature. If that is so, a good many scientists (quite keen ones, too) seem not to have discovered it.

Nor am I convinced, nor do I find quite intelligible, Dean Myers' insistence that the simplest or the most subtle scrutiny of experience reveals to any candid observer that he has two utterly diverse kinds of experience, that of sense data and that of purpose. A biological psychology has no difficulty in finding the natural gradation of impulse to purpose. Nor do I for a moment see what is meant by calling "short-sighted" a view of nature that makes all our experiences complications, in varying degrees, of physical processes. I do not think it is candid scrutiny but *a priori* assumptions that make it possible to discover two different kinds of experience, two worlds different in kind rather than in degree.

This discussion could go on endlessly, with Dean Myers and myself accusing each other of myopia. We are both doubtless dogmatic, and I do not think we will convince each other. I cannot convince Dean Myers by the addition of a three-hundred-

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word postscript to my article. It is a pity, too, for he seems a man who is a friend to truth.

Irwin Edman
Columbia University

Cavalier Assumptions and Misconceptions

In this discussion, it seems to me that Mr. Edman takes much the sounder position, but I wish that he had argued for it a little more rigorously. Mr. Myers, on the other hand, while seeming to have all the better of the argument, has taken a position which strikes me as a compound of cavalier assumptions and misconceptions of science.

I think Mr. Edman is right in contending that a theological view is not necessary to a meaningful conception of spirit; that ends and values are what human beings experience them as being; and that to many to whom theological sanctions are baseless or meaningless, life is nevertheless genuinely worth living.

Mr. Myers declares that secularism means the decline of spirituality. But presumably, this is what was to be proved. He assures us that the line of Locke and Hume leads to a dead end. But this is, again, to beg the question. And then he takes the nonchalant attitude that if he and other defenders of a theological position sometimes *do* beg basic questions, they are justified in doing so because their "opponents" do likewise!

Mr. Myers assumes that scientific methods have validity only on the basis of metaphysical assumptions—in this case, that of the uniformity of nature. But a universe with a minimum of uniformities and a maximum of discontinuities could yield verifiable assertions. It seems to me that science is, in any rigorous sense, metaphysically neutral.

The clincher for Mr. Myers apparently is that inferences about a spiritual realm are as justified as any others. An inference, however, has no status as knowledge, unless it is established as such. If Mr. Myers can *validate* an inference in some way other than scientifically, he keeps his wisdom a closely guarded secret.

Fortunately for the human race, the spirit of man will not be bound by theological disputations. Maybe there is a God, and maybe there isn't. Some people have to believe there is, and some people don't. John Lovejoy Elliott, the wisest man I ever knew, once observed: "I've known good men who believed in God, and good men who didn't. I've never known a good man who didn't believe in people."

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A Challenging Question

This is an old dispute that Edman and Myers are engaging in, and one wonders why it keeps coming up again and again in Western history. Actually the issue this time does not revolve around the problem of the necessity of theology for the preservation of the spiritual life. Edman demolishes the assertion that without belief in God, man cannot live a healthy, moral, socially productive, and emotionally and artistically full life. With his usual clarity and affection for mankind, he marshals all the old evidence against his theological opponent. And all of Myers' counter-claims are not relevant to this issue.

The interesting problem of their debate concerns the adequacy of the secular life. And here, I think, Myers does raise a challenging question: Is secularism an adequate philosophy of nature and spirit? Myers claims that secularism is not adequate because it makes certain assumptions about the principle of the uniformity of nature, which assumptions tie secularism up inevitably with theological beliefs of a fundamental sort. The alternative to theologically rooted science is irrational secularism.

It is difficult to see how secularism, or naturalism, to use a more modern term, can answer this objection that its basic tenets do rest upon assumptions for which there is either very little evidence or *no* evidence at all, as in the case of the inductive principle. But—and here we must part company with Myers, too—it is simply the most flossy kind of outmoded dogmatism to maintain that the ground of our scientific knowl-

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edge is some sort of God or divine personality, however much we might like to believe that. There is not the slightest evidence for this contention, only the unfortunate fact that naturalism has no answer either. But we cannot build knowledge on someone else's ignorance; that is, we cannot proceed from the inability of a scientific philosophy to provide solutions to its fundamental problems to a facile and muddled theological solution. As Russell once said: "Whatever knowledge is attainable, must be attained by scientific methods; and what science cannot discover, mankind cannot know."

Myers is correct in calling a halt to any kind of overweening assurance of naturalism or secularism—in pointing out that it does not have adequate answers to the big, bothersome problems regarding nature and spirit; but he is as wrong as the last hundred years of careful analysis of theological concepts like God and Evil can show him to be in offering us the hodge-podge of contemporary theology as the most satisfactory answer. If it is the irrationalism of naturalism that worries him, surely he will not find its antidote in the irrationalism of contemporary theology!

Both theology and naturalism are speculative world-pictures that attempt large interpretations of our limited factual knowledge. They are alternatives only in their varying degrees of dogmatism; but together they are in opposition to a much sounder alternative, philosophical scepticism. But this view makes all of us sad [sic], so much so that no one will live with it; and the quarrel between the naturalists and the theologians will continue, unabated.

Morris Weitz
Vassar College

Not the Supernatural, but Churches

I think it highly likely that what Professor Edman rebels against is not God but theology, not the supernatural but churches. He cites Lucretius, who exclaimed, "So great the evils that religion prompts"; and he cites Voltaire, who was in revolt against frocked greed and cupidity. Quite so. But Lucretius' real aim was to free mankind from superstitious terror of a proliferation of gods; and Voltaire, who, like Erasmus, knew which shafts were dipped and which were not, said, "If there were no God, it would be necessary to invent him."

If Professor Edman is really moved to compassion for those who would despair save in the presence of the Statistic and the Slide-rule, I commend him to Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Therein the tolerant vicar recognized the symptoms: ". . . that make[s] them through impatience, to murmur against God many times, to rave, to blaspheme, turn Atheists, and seek to offer violence to themselves. In the morning they wish for evening, and for morning in the evening. . . ." As part of the treatment of this disease, Burton prescribed: "Two main Antidotes opposite to Despair, good Hope out of God's Word, to be embraced; perverse security and Presumption from the Devil's treachery, to be rejected; one saves, the other kills, destroys the soul, and doth as much harm as Despair itself."

Professor Edman has written stimulatingly; he even sought to prepare his readers for Dean Myers' brilliant refutation. Screwtape was never in better form. But I think that a reissue of *Philosopher's Holiday* would still be prefaced by the quotation from *Phaedrus* that appeared on its flyleaf ten years ago:

> And therefore the mind of the philosopher alone has wings; and this is just, for he is always, according to the measure of his abilities, clinging in recollection to those things in which God abides, and in beholding which he is what he is.

Henry L. Shepherd, Secretary
The Guild of Scholars
in the Episcopal Church
Hartford 6, Connecticut

The Question of Truth

What I have to say is presented as addenda to the able essay by Dean Myers. Mr. Edman relies throughout his article on question-begging epithets. In his first three

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paragraphs alone, he manages to present secularists as "rational," "liberal," "empirical" and "objective"—in name, but without evidence. It is clever. It is out of place.

Mr. Edman's actual argument is that a secularized spiritual life must be provided for those who cannot believe in God, for otherwise they are in danger of finding life "a nightmare or a nausea." Apparently Mr. Edman thinks Christians have at bottom a comforting belief, atheists do not, and something must be done about that. For atheists life must not become a nightmare! One is tempted to say, *je n'en vois pas la nécessité*. But this does not meet the issue. It may be the case that without God life is a nightmare, and there is no God. Then life *is* a nightmare. God may exist. Then the atheist had better reform himself. Perhaps the spiritual life can be cultivated with or without God. Then there is no occasion for special help for either atheist or theist. These possibilities raise the question of truth, the question Mr. Edman avoids. This is odd in a philosopher.

But eventually he cites evidence. He reminds us that non-Christians have lived virtuously and happily, even nobly. Then why all this to-do over nightmare and nausea? Cannot atheists see their own happiness, or are they peculiarly susceptible to bogies? Mr. Edman's present efforts are then misdirected. Instead of philosophical argument, he should be writing bright biographies of atheists, some great, others humble, but all spiritual, unafraid and happy. But were these men what they were *because of* or *in spite of* their atheism? When secularism finds the universe empty of purpose and of God, does that become a help or a hindrance to a happy spiritual life? This question cannot be avoided, because *Christian* saints are also real. Belief in God was for them a source of spiritual strength. What about atheism? Hindrance or help? If a help, then there is a *theoretical* problem: how can contradictory beliefs be effective aids to similar results? If a hindrance, then the *practical* conclusion is obvious: promote belief in God. Hardened adult atheists should be given such relief as is possible in their circumstances, but their children deserve a better fate. Fervent supernaturalism is the thing for them.

This is not frivolous. It is the legitimate result of ignoring truth. But that is the real question. Atheism or theism, which belief is true? Even though we may be unable to get a conclusive answer, if we are men we must work for the best answer the evidence warrants.

I wish to add one word, not about secularism, but about the problem I have just raised. If there is no God, the Christian saint is really a kind of nightmare for the reflective atheist. But if Christianity is true, the noble atheist presents no comparable problem to the Christian. The atheist denies God. In terms of the Christian religion, it does not follow that God denies him. Good atheists believe in and work for the things which are fair, noble and of good report, things with which God also is concerned. God extends his grace to all who can receive it and in the manner in which they can. Many are helped although unwittingly.

Howard D. Roelofs
University of Cincinnati

Two Distinct Questions

In reading Mr. Myers' article, one would be led to suppose that Mr. Edman had attempted to offer a reasoned defense of the metaphysical position to which he holds. Such, I take it, was not his purpose. Throughout his article, Mr. Edman assumes (whether rightly or wrongly) that a "naturalistic" metaphysics is a tenable position. Mr. Myers is so concerned to attack this assumption that he neglects the issue which Mr. Edman has raised, viz., whether spiritual and moral values "derive their sanction and significance from a supernatural world."

I should like to suggest that the issue, thus stated, is somewhat ambiguous. It may be taken to mean either (a) that we cannot experience or "believe in" values unless we are supernaturalists, or (b) that we, as philosophers, cannot properly interpret the experience of value except in terms of a supernaturalist metaphysics. These are two distinct questions. While Mr. Edman deals

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with both, he does not, I believe, distinguish sharply enough between them.

It would seem to me that Mr. Edman's main emphasis is placed upon the first of these alternative interpretations: he is concerned to show that one who is committed to a secular metaphysics can both experience and "believe in" values. On this point I share his conviction. And in Mr. Myers' rejoinder I find nothing which provides any reason for doubting it. Even Mr. Myers' unsupported contention that "when the tides of secularism and materialism have risen, the spiritual life has ebbed below the level attained by it at other times," would not disprove Mr. Edman, for the latter is not necessarily arguing that secularism itself *promotes* spirituality, but only that the two are compatible.

Perhaps Mr. Myers would say that while secularism is compatible with the spiritual life, supernaturalism actively promotes it. But here we come to the intrinsic difficulty of the problem which Mr. Edman has raised. What constitutes the spiritual life, and what constitutes adequate experience of, and belief in, this mode of life, is a problem demanding scrupulous analysis. Until agreement is reached at this point (and it is by no means certain that Mr. Edman and Mr. Myers would agree here) it seems impossible to discuss whether or not secularism (*or* supernaturalism) is compatible with a spiritual life, much less whether specific forms of secularism (or of supernaturalism) promote it.

Maurice Mandelbaum
Dartmouth College

The Pragmatic Function and the Truth of Religion

My central dissatisfaction with Mr. Edman's essay arises from the fact that he overlooked, as it appears to me, a question considerably more difficult for him than those he argued.

There is no doubt that atheists can be heroes and superb artists and can perhaps even be saintly, if not saints. However, from the quality of the life of individual atheists or of social atheistic sub-groups, one cannot infer anything about the pragmatic function of religion and much less about its truth or falsehood. I propose to consider first the pragmatic value of religion. I question (a) whether the life of the individual atheist would not have lacked in quality had those types of experience and beliefs that derive from a sense of the supernatural (non-naturalistically conceived) been *totally* eradicated from his heritage; and (b) whether a society can even be imagined as a successful historical entity which would be *totally* free from the values and beliefs which have their source and derive their content from man's awareness of the supernatural.

Obviously no individual atheist can renounce his rich religious heritage when he gives up God. Neither does a society in so far as it becomes secularized. But an individual who lives from his heritage without adding to it is simply a parasite; nor would parasitism be feasible, obviously, as a universal maxim. Again, whether individual men could become fully human, and for how long they could remain so, without sinking their roots in rich supernaturalistic religious loam, is a question which Mr. Edman does not seriously consider. To bring up a completely secular man we would have to insulate him from our cultural heritage altogether: from our art, from our literature, possibly our music; he would require a totally new foundation for his moral and political life, a new language and, as is implied in Mr. Myers' criticism, a new science.

And what would a *completely* secularized society be like? This is an empirical question on which history gives us absolutely no information whatever. The fact should make the naturalist pause, all the more since scientists like Malinowski have convincingly shown the essential "sociological function" of supernatural beliefs in the formation and maintenance of cultures. The only conception of a totally naturalistic society that I can think of is Huxley's *Brave New World*. But even Huxley's nightmare is too optimistically conceived; for detailed study of contemporary naturalistic moral philosophies has convinced me that a denial

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of the *a aprioricity* of value entails the acceptance of might or blind brute force (in some subtly disguised form, such as a voluntaristic postulation or fiat) as the ground of moral decisions. From this I gather that a society which in an effective operative fashion were to define value in terms of interest or of utility would be even more ferocious and more brutalized than contemporary so-called "civilization" actually is.

The question as to the truth of religion enables me to turn to Mr. Myers' paper. In spite of my sympathy with his general position I fear that, were he to inquire into my opinions, he would deem them as erroneous as those of Mr. Edman. For I am convinced that in general terms Christian orthodoxy is true. In its transcendental, personalistic conception of God, orthodoxy represents a more comprehensive and profounder organization of human—or at least of Western—experience than any atheistic philosophy or any "liberal theology" could claim. In its rejection of Manicheanism, in its dismissal of shallow Pelagian optimism, in its struggle with the problem of evil and in its central awareness of death and of human helplessness before its own sinfulness, it considers factors which a human synthesis cannot leave out of account and retain depth and comprehensiveness. But the problem as to what content one shall give the term "truth" is an extremely difficult technical problem, and for the traditionalist to fail seriously to grapple with positivistic criticism is to fall into the error of the positivist, who dismisses anything prior to Dewey or to Carnap as obscurantist failure of nerve. For all we positively *know*, Captain Ahab (as Ishmael reported him) may after all have been right, and the thing behind the visible things may be sinewed with an outrageous strength and an inscrutable malice. Ahab of course was mad with pride. But about these matters we can never *know*—unless we blandly disregard the limited coefficient of elasticity of the word "know."

Again, while my conviction favors Christian orthodoxy and rejects theological liberalism as heretically shallow and partial, it cannot accept either the historical or the institutional claims of religion. It seems to me that the genuinely religious man (who is not a mere partisan) should be the first to disengage himself from pseudo-history and from the evils to which institutionalized religion lends itself. The validity of orthodoxy is that of a postulate of the practical reason: it cannot claim scientifically controlled evidence or clear philosophic demonstration in its favor. Religion is neither comfort nor, in the narrow sense, "knowledge." It is ineradicably anguished faith, which, by organizing the heterogeneity of historical and individual experience and integrating these with positive knowledge, completes our partial and trivial knowledge, gives us our ground of ultimate value, and thus allows our full humanity to flower.

Eliseo Vivas
Ohio State University

Dubious Identifications

Professor Edman has painted a most impressive picture of the courageous, "spiritual" atheist, fighting at tremendous odds throughout the centuries against a vast accumulation of perverse and yet persuasive theological lore, to preserve the dignity of human nature and the rigorous integrity of "scientific empiricism." This poetic image is beautifully portrayed. It stirs the heart, but also stirs up certain questions in the mind.

Mr. Edman of course would be the first to admit that what he rather vaguely refers to as "naturalism" or "secularism" is a complex system of doctrines susceptible to widely varying interpretations. The same is true of Christianity, which Mr. Edman, with little or no supporting argument, seems to identify with an extreme version of Puritan Calvinism. It is only on the basis of this *a priori* judgment that we can understand his remarkable assertion that, from the standpoint of "theology," "not only is the individual human being condemned with the whole of human nature, but all of human history is dismissed as trivial or worse. . . ."

This lugubrious view would be rejected by the most authoritative and influential

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theologians of both the West and the East as well as by a vast majority of those calling themselves Christians at the present time. Most students agree that the dogma of the Incarnation is the central doctrine of the Christian Faith. It is hard to see how this doctrine can be reconciled with the view that history is something "trivial." If so, God must have been a fool to have taken it so seriously.

For some unknown reason, Mr. Edman seems to identify his atheistic metaphysics with "scientific inquiry" and "the habits of mind engendered by modern science." But is there anything unscientific about the careful analysis of empirical events, and the relentless search for causes really capable of explaining these events? Such analysis and search have led a majority of the great philosophers of our Western tradition, both Christian and non-Christian, such as Plato, Aristotle, Avicenna, Averroes, Maimonides, Aquinas, Scotus, Descartes and many others, to conclude that the contingent, transitory events of the natural world cannot possibly be accounted for without a first self-sustaining cause. The arguments supporting this theory have been worked out with at least as much attention to empirical fact and logical structure as those of the opposed metaphysical position. Mr. Edman obviously prefers the latter, as of course he has a right to do. But when, without any reasons, he simply dismisses the metaphysics he dislikes with a pejorative epithet—"unscientific"—one begins to wonder whether he really has any reasons. Apparently we are to conclude that the metaphysics of Democritus and Lucretius are somehow more "scientific" than the metaphysics of Leibnitz and Professor Whitehead. It would be interesting to learn the grounds for such a remarkable judgment.

Whatever they are, Mr. Edman evidently believes that they must lead any fair-minded man to accept a materialistic ontology, or what he calls "a physical view of nature." If this means anything at all, it means a nature in which there is no place for rational cognition and freedom of choice. "Physical" things do not produce universal concepts within themselves, nor do they freely choose between alternatives which they rationally understand. And yet the term "spiritual" has a profound attraction for Mr. Edman. The natural being "man, for all his lusts, confusions and weaknesses, is on occasion an artist, a hero, a saint." Nature then is not wholly "physical," but also "spiritual." It "grows spirit as the soil grows flowers." The reader may perhaps be pardoned at this point for beginning to wonder just what Mr. Edman means by "spirit." Are the roots and stalk of the plant "physical" and the flower "spiritual"? If so, the word is being used in a merely metaphorical sense to signify those aspects of physical nature in which Mr. Edman takes peculiar delight, and artists and saints will be regarded as lovely manifestations of the purely physical forces of nature—like orchids in a jungle. But unfortunately as empiricists we know that such forces alone are quite incapable of producing such manifestations. The immaterial powers of intellection and freedom of choice are also necessary. Saints and artists do not grow on trees. So perhaps Mr. Edman is using the term "spiritual" in a non-metaphorical sense to signify something distinct from the quantitatively measurable processes of physical nature. But then what becomes of his "physical view of nature," and the materialistic metaphysics which, for some reason, he seems to identify with "science"?

John Wild
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Spiritual Power through Faith

Mr. Edman's secular view of the spiritual life obviously results from his trust in the scientific method alone for the attainment of knowledge. He suggests that a theological view of the world conflicts with "the habits of mind engendered by modern science," e.g., the habit of dispensing with final causes or purposes in the description of nature. The main question raised by his article is whether the philosophical naturalism which results from such an exclusive allegiance to the scientific method can account for all the facts. If it can, as Mr. Edman thinks, a

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secular conception of the spiritual life will be, if not satisfactory from the point of view of man's hopes, at least appropriate to the realities of his existence.

In my opinion, the naturalistic view is unable to account either for the order of nature in general or for the emergence and evolution of life. But its most glaring failure is to be found in its conception of the spirit and values of man. Like Santayana, Mr. Edman holds that the spirit of man is "the flowering and the fruition of a fleshly creature in a physical or mechanical world." "Nature grows spirit," he says, "as the soil grows flowers." The implication of course is that spirit is simply a function of matter.

Is this view of spirit credible? Spirit, as we experience it in ourselves, seems to be a quite different kind of activity from that which goes on in matter as it is described by the physicist, the chemist or the biologist. It is moved by final rather than efficient and material causes, i.e., its acts are not determined by natural forces, but by freely chosen purposes. Its activity is governed, not by natural laws, but by logical, moral and aesthetic norms. Its disinterested and inclusive love differs radically from the natural love of sex or friendship, which is reserved for those who attract us and reciprocate our love. If this is so, how can spirit be said to be grown by nature "as the soil grows flowers" without romantically endowing nature with capacities unknown to the natural scientists who describe it?

Much of Mr. Edman's article any fair-minded Christian must accept. It is true of course that many persons to whom the religious view of the world seems incredible are sincerely devoted to spiritual values like truth and justice. Christians who deny this are narrow and uncharitable. But Christians must also assert that religious faith makes a profound difference in the spiritual life. To them the spiritual life consists of something more than the devotion of the human will to ideals, to "the ends which justify life." It includes the surrender of oneself in faith to what one takes to be the divine will and purpose. To be sure, it involves devotion to the "ends" or "ultimates" served by secular humanists, e.g., truth, justice and peace. But it also involves dedication to the divine purpose which is the Source of these spiritual values, and which bestows upon them a higher meaning than they possess in themselves. Moreover, Christians are interested, not only in spiritual *values*, but also in spiritual *power;* and they are confident that when the human spirit is united by faith with God, it is sustained and strengthened by His eternal Spirit. Therefore, while they need not and should not deny that spiritual values are possible on a secular basis, they can never accept the naturalist's conception of either the spirit or its values as adequate.

George F. Thomas
Princeton University

Assumptions and Irrelevancies

I wish to make two points concerning Dean Myers' reply to Professor Edman: (a) the reply is based upon assuming without discussion precisely those basic ideas which Professor Edman's article calls into question; (b) the reply capitalizes on certain lapses in Professor Edman's paper, and in so doing shifts the focus of discussion to insignificant matters.

There are three glaring examples of Dean Myers' "assumption without discussion":

1. His reply opens with the confident assertion that man's experience falls into two sharply differentiated categories—sense experiences and value experiences. The secularist's point, however, is that there are no legitimate grounds for assuming that man's experiences fall into any such neatly segregated pigeon holes. Man's experiences are, to be sure, infinitely varied, but they blend into one another at every point. To distinguish sharply between "kinds" is to indulge in high and often misleading abstraction.

2. Dean Myers' confident assertion that the scientific assumption of the regularity of the universe is a "theological assumption" overlooks one of the principal points at issue. Professor Edman would surely admit, indeed he insists upon, the existence of order and regularity. There exists purposive behavior—for example, in plants, animals

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and men. The secularist argues, however, that recognition of such order requires neither (a) the assumption that the existence of order is antecedently improbable, nor (b) the assumption that, being improbable, there must be some force in the world which has dragged it out of the limbo of improbability into the realm of the actual. When one infers from the existence of order to a necessary cause thereof, one is usually concealing a tacit assumption that such order, being antecedently improbable, must have been caused in order to be the case at all. The secularist maintains that *this* assumption is gratuitous, and Dean Myers fails to answer the point.

3. Dean Myers seems also to require of Professor Edman some proof of the non-existence of God. ("But if he goes on to assert that God does not exist . . . he is making assumptions to which his 'verifiable data' are irrelevant.") This is like asking one to prove that there is not a blue daffodil on the top of Grant's tomb. One can *prove* no such thing. All one can do, if someone claiming deeper insight wishes to insist that there *is* such a blue daffodil, is insist that this *positive* claim be substantiated. The burden of proof lies on him who asserts. Dean Myers must prove God's existence to Professor Edman; Professor Edman does not have to prove God's non-existence to Dean Myers. . . .

In two respects, Professor Edman leaves his flank open to tangential attack. In neither case, however, is the main issue at stake (this refers to my second point).

1. The entire discussion of the "sadness" created by one world-view or another is absurd. The question "What account of the world is true?" is not answered by appeal to sadness. Professor Edman was carried away by his devotion to literary style in the first instance. The amount of time Dean Myers spends on the point is an inverse measure of the lack of time he spends on crucial matters.

2. A metaphor is bad if it is misleading. A refutation based upon a misleading metaphor is intellectually dishonest. The poetry in Professor Edman's soul got the better of him when he wrote that "nature grows spirit as the soil grows flowers." Dean Myers devotes a lengthy paragraph to demonstration that this metaphor better illustrates his point than Professor Edman's. This proves of course that the metaphor was a poor one. That is all it proves.

James Ward Smith
Princeton University

The Lens of a Tentative Naturalism

David Hume somewhere said that "nature is too strong for principle." I shall construct (in a paragraph) a whimsical and tentative naturalism based on *this* concept of nature, and look through its lens at the positions of our two disputants.

Confronted by science, especially physics and its alleged implication of the world as a cosmic mechanism, the spiritually intelligent layman will wince a little, then go on adoring, and laying down his life for, something better than any existing thing. Or, when he is told that not only do flowers come from the soil but so do the flower-seeds, he will either love the good earth more than ever as his generous Mother, or feel inarticulately that science makes certain abstractions and thus fails to honor the fine and precious substance of untheorized experience. On the other side of the fence from science is theology, and this too makes him wince, for similar reasons. The method of metaphysical or theological "argument" amazes him—puts him in a maze. It either concocts insoluble problems (evil, for one, as Augustine had the courage to see and say) or simply disquiets him with the sense that he had better return to cultivating his garden or lose his sanity, like Candide. "Nature," to him, is what, upon occasion, nourishes him and gives him peace, and it is what deprives and agonizes him. He must take certain measures to make the nourishment and peace more secure. This is his naturalism.

Mr. Edman is eloquent in defense of the precious substance of experience (its poetry and music), that which a rigorous logical or scientific formulation leaves out. But he makes poetry precarious by asserting, like

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the traditional materialists, the priority of the physical over the spiritual. Matter is prior to mind in some sense, to be sure, but not in a sense that Mr. Edman understands or means. This is a flaw in his naturalism, making him wistful and disillusioned in the presence of values, like Santayana and Epicurus.

Mr. Myers shares Mr. Edman's concern over the omissions of logic and science. But he embarrasses theology by arguing the priority of the spiritual over the physical—despite his disclaimer. He saddles theology with poor arguments. (A theology without poor arguments perhaps is impossible; so Mr. Myers may be doing as well as the angels.) Man, says Mr. Myers, is a person, a spirit; therefore God is a spirit, a person. But man, one would think, is also a body. Is God therefore a body? Mr. Myers also argues that you can't justify the principle of the uniformity of nature without theology. He has overlooked the recent excellent interpretations of this "assumption" of science which make theology quite irrelevant to it.

Well then, what *is* nature—this sustaining, this devastating somewhat? (Spinoza called it Nature or God, interchangeably.) I am trying to find out.

Virgil C. Aldrich
Kenyon College

The Edge of Reconciliation

I believe that Mr. Edman and Mr. Myers may be hovering on the edge of a reconciliation. Such a reconciliation would necessitate some important concessions by both parties. Could they honestly make these concessions?

Mr. Edman prejudices the argument by attributing to his opponents an "otherworldliness" that involves a lack of responsible concern for this world, and a belief in a "supernatural" which we cannot encounter but must accept on the basis of "fine spun dialectical demonstration." Mr. Edman can find much in the Christian tradition, past and present, to justify this interpretation. Yet I myself, and many other "liberal" Christians, would repudiate this position as fundamentally unchristian. We believe that Christianity is not escapist or other-worldly in this sense, but rather "incarnational"—that is, passionately concerned with the spiritual life here and now, the present alleviation of suffering, and the strengthening of spiritual values in our society. Nor are we interested in an unknowable and unexperienceable "supernatural" Deity; we believe in a Deity who can be, and is, *encountered* in religious experience, exemplified in all instances of "Christian love" *(agape)*, and uniquely manifested ("made flesh") in Jesus. Could Mr. Edman meet Mr. Myers halfway by conceiving of our religious position in these terms?

Also, would he be willing to discard another obstacle to reconciliation by *not* attributing to Christians the belief that men are "simply vessels of corruption," and by re-examining the very different belief that men are made "in the image of God" and therefore not *radically* corrupted, even by "original sin"?

Could Mr. Myers, in turn, agree that Christian theologians should remember that God moves in his mysterious ways, even in the hearts of sincere humanists, that the Christian Church is not the only possible avenue to salvation, that there exists a "latent church" which includes all who are earnestly seeking for God along ecclesiastically unorthodox lines—in short, that Christian theology must be re-thought and re-expressed in contemporary terms?

I suggest that both parties try to clear up numerous semantic confusions of this type, in a spirit of charitable sympathy, and *then* see how far apart they really are.

Theodore M. Greene
Yale University

A Provincial Rationalist Protests

To one grateful reader it seems that Professor Edman has made his point with his customary sureness and grace. However, it should be protested that he concedes too much.

He speaks of the current renaissance of supernaturalism. Is there really a renaissance? It is a grand word and the occasion

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for it does not happen every day. Has supernaturalism been reborn? Has it a new lease on life? A genuine rebirth of supernaturalism in this century would be something to see!

It is true that the books of Toynbee, Noüy and other apologists for a tenuous theism have reached the eminence of the best-seller lists. But how much conviction can such tentative arguments carry? The reactions of many readers are mixed. They enjoy Toynbee's scholarship but resent his Anglican curate mentality. And a biologist who turns his science to the support of hazy doctrines of God and immortality may do his reputation more harm than good.

It is noticeable that such books and magazine articles in the same vein are not reassuring to churchmen. The bishops and the preachers are crying out in alarm that not enough people are coming to church to save the church. Only a year ago, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the late Rufus M. Jones earnestly called upon Christian leaders to restate their dogmas or face disaster. However, it is noticeable that liberal churches that have gone even further in their restatement than he recommended have not met with much encouragement. Professor Stace, in the same series of essays, arrives at the conclusion that Christianity cannot maintain itself in this age of science and that no new religion would have a chance.

A cohort of scholars who are protagonists of Christianity will now assure their followings with glee that one of the most eminent of modern philosophers proclaims the renaissance of belief in God and immortality. (They will not use the word superstition, of course.)

They will also take comfort in the statement that the number of secularists is insignificantly small. Anyway, in a forum where anything you say is used against you, it is well to be guarded. Sure enough, Dean Myers makes a point of it.

Now the number of academic philosophers is limited, but think of the students who have sat before them, the public that has listened to them, and the even wider public that has read their writings. There are tens of thousands of scientists and professional men who are competent to weigh and assay modern thought wherever they find it, and to reject and disregard what does not come up to a high standard of credibility.

Then around and beyond the élite are vast numbers of "provincial rationalists" who have read widely, developed their critical judgment and done some independent thinking. In the face of restricted opportunities they have devoted themselves to the intellectual life. They have a strong sense of intellectual integrity. Unless I am misinformed, one of this type of provincials was elected president two or three generations ago and made quite a name for himself. Men of intellectual vigor are the salt of the earth in college or out. If this gullible world can be saved it is they who will save it.

It is very definitely not true, as Professor Edman alleges, that the secularists have forgotten the poetry of existence. I once served on a committee charged to compile a humanist anthology. Six or eight of us gathered so much material in poetry and prose that our trouble was in agreeing on selections! There was even some good material forthcoming from members of the committee. And if a general claim must be backed up by a particular instance, I cite Edwin Markham's poem beginning

> We men of earth have here the stuff
> Of Paradise. We have enough.
> We need no other stones to build
> The stairs into the unfulfilled. . . .

All in all, I am forced to the hopeful conclusion that Professor Edman does not know his own strength!

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Not the Garden, but the Gardener

In his felicitous FORUM essay in the Winter, 1948-49, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Mr. Edman pointedly comments upon a shortcoming of naturalism—a paucity of poets. After all, he seems to say, it is the poet who brings philosophy to

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flower and fruit. I suggest that Mr. Edman's closing figure of Nature growing spirit "as the soil grows flowers" bears implications for poetic thought which both Mr. Edman and, in his apt comment, Mr. Myers overlook. (I often wish that more philosophers, fond of horticultural metaphors, were practicing gardeners.)

For, except metaphorically, soil does not grow anything. As every gardener is aware, when by hastening processes of death and decay in garden waste he makes his compost, soil is only an expendable medium for plant growth and fruition. In this significant process the flower is at best simply a glorified set of generative organs, often imperfect. Between a semantic sentimentalism and an empirical view of the facts of life one discerns a difference. And, as Mr. Myers wisely suggests, we should examine the total experience.

Therefore, instead of going blithely to the wild, as have most philosophers, and poets too, for enticing floral metaphors, we might well look to flower-experience within our human economy. It is just here, of course, that philosophy must have meaning. Is there in this economy a more important person than the creative gardener? Consider then the philosopher's flower and his seeds subject to the purposive impulses generated in the gardener's life of the spirit, where moments of secular depression and exaltation alternate. The soil is only a serviceable medium, not indispensable; flower and seed are but incidents in a persistent quest. The "green thumb" of the gardener is the really eloquent symbol of the spirit.

From this point Mr. Edman's poet must carry on.

Charles A. Dawson
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The Realm of Faith

In a book which aims to explain the basic physical and chemical happenings in living things on the basis of catalysis, there is a final chapter entitled: "Philosophy, the Guide of Mental Life," the real meaning of Phi Beta Kappa. Both scientific knowledge, and philosophical wisdom based on this knowledge, assume faith in the reality and dependability of mind. Our observations and our deductions therefrom govern our daily lives, and give rise to what we term "spiritual values." But what we term "theology" commonly magnifies the differences in creeds and rituals existing among various religions, to the detriment of the general belief that God is the Father of us all. Faith in the veiled ultimates of both mind and matter is condensed in the following lines:

> Mind's multi-facet gleams all come to naught;
> Inscrutables trap every ray of thought.
> Yet on this transient earth we strive to learn
> How the Creation's ultimates, in turn
> Formed atoms, molecules, then life and man,
> O'er eons since the universe began.
> Much may our finite minds in wonder see—
> All ultimates remain a mystery.
> Stronger than death, love seeks eternal day,
> And faith, transcending reason, shows the way.

Properly considered, science has great spiritual value, though it has often been obstructed by creed-bound theologians—consider Galileo, Roger Bacon, and Bishop Ussher's "Chronology," for example. And as we extend the frontiers of our knowledge, we come more and more in contact with unknowns and unknowables, where only faith can guide us.

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The Seed of God

One reads the words of Dean Edward Myers with deep appreciation for a fine statement of a satisfying point of view. The application of what is known as the "scientific method" in America, particularly, has devalued so many of the greatest experiences available to us all, that a clarification of that method's shortcomings and applicability is of help to everyone, whatever his theological rating.

This reader finds particular happiness in the closing paragraphs where Dean Myers quotes a sentence from Dr. Edman and

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comments upon it. The sentence is, "Nature grows spirit as the soil grows flowers." The ambiguity of the sentence has been pointed out most adequately and need not be referred to as such here. Added interest may come from the correlation between what Dean Myers says of the need for *seed* in the ground before it can grow anything, and the Quaker concept of the Seed of God.

As is probably very generally known, the young George Fox, often referred to as the founder of the Quaker group, albeit unintentionally, achieved no rest in his soul until it became clear to him that there was in every man something of the divine and that man attained his highest service and satisfaction only as that divinity in him was linked up with the greater Divinity. He referred to this divine in man as the Inner Light or as the Seed of God.

This concept is often mistaken for what is usually called conscience. People speak of acting "in line with the dictates of conscience." George Fox meant more than this. The Seed was not conscience, for conscience is affected by social habits and current customs. It may "hurt" when something "not acceptable" is done, but be quite undisturbed when something morally wrong but "acceptable" is done. But the Seed of God, as George Fox thought of it, is not thus variable in its values. It is, I believe one could say, an index of man's ability to become his best self; a measure of man's capability to become the channel through which power —personal and spiritual—may flow. As he grows aware of the Seed in him he longs to have it come to its full maturity because only so is there real fulfillment for himself as a person and as a social being in his time.

The experience of the awareness of the Seed of God in one's self is perhaps an all-encompassing one, for it includes the experiences of the senses as well as those of the heart and mind. It is not demonstrable except as one watches those who have accepted the leadership of the Inner Light and who feel the growth of the Seed of God within themselves.

All of this sounds theological. It is much more simple than that. It has been said in many ways through many ages. Is it not, perhaps, saying in only a slightly different way what Dean Myers has written in his closing paragraphs?

Grace S. Yaukey
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Until a Spiritual Radium . . .

It is refreshing to note that neither Professor Edman nor Dean Myers has played Pharisee in the discussion of spiritual values, but that each freely admits that he can learn from the other. As do the Hindus, they infer that there are many ways for finding what is so, and that all truth is one, whether outlined by scientist, philosopher or theologian.

Admittedly, the difficulty lies in being certain that one has found a thing that is so, which should engender a deep humility in all seekers. Nothing yields to absolute proof: neither memory nor emotion, neither consciousness nor God. That we now consider as certainties the basic human relations and ultimate physical death is because we have noted only occasional and disputable departures from these patterns. Let a spiritual radium be discovered, and a new thesis may be required.

Fortunately, the opportunities for knowing are apparently endless. However, unless we are to be willing schizophrenics, all things are integrated, and each small purpose infers a larger purpose. If the oneness so produced is our goal, then it matters little whether we call it God, or the summation of mass-energy. Our loneliness would prefer the oneness to be endowed with understanding, but for those who cannot believe it so, there is likewise a place. But, above all, let man be humble in the face of the wonder he does not understand.

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MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

On the Report of the President's Commission . . .

There is a fundamental issue implicit in the current discussions of higher education. Broadly stated, the issue is this: Shall higher education be essentially an esoteric matter wherein a gifted few are selected and initiated into the mysteries, or shall it be a right of the citizen—without respect to race, color, creed, economic status or political affiliation—to have the highest level of education to which his desires and abilities entitle him? Perhaps the issue could be stated more narrowly or more accurately, but this is less important than that the issue appear and be recognized.

Much of the controversy in higher education arises because few educators and fewer institutions are content to adopt a policy for themselves and to follow it. On the contrary, they not only possess "the true faith delivered from the saints," but they desire, and on the slightest provocation are prepared, to light the faggots against anyone who deviates from that faith. Would it be stretching a point and a pun too far to say that they are prepared to make it a burning issue?

Being a graduate of Oxford and respectful of its tradition, I understand and, to a degree, share the conviction of those who believe that theology and moral philosophy are concerned with the most important of man's relationships. Yet we must realize that the sciences are also a way of revealing the relationship of man to God and of man to man; and it is conceivable that the nuclear physicists are closer to the Ultimate Reality than are many professing and practicing theologians.

There is a diversity of gifts, and it seems necessary to have a diversity of instrumentalities through which those gifts may be cultivated and developed. Important as theologians and moral philosophers are in any society, our twentieth century society also needs doctors, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers, engineers, veterinarians and many other professional persons. Accordingly, there is need for the esoteric, the general, and the practical. There is need for the independent college of liberal arts (whether esoteric or not), for the university college of arts and sciences, for the professional schools, the land-grant colleges, the technological institutes, the junior colleges, the technical high schools, and every other educational institution making an effective contribution toward the improvement of the minds and the perfection of the skills of its students.

The fundamental problem is not to be solved by forcing every institution into a mold. It will be solved primarily by a recognition that our society moves in the direction of opportunity for all—opportunity for each according to his desire and his ability. In such a society there will be glory for each institution and glory enough for all, if each will endeavor to perform the task for which its means, its personnel and its facilities are best adapted. No institution can be all things to all men. Nor should it dissipate its resources to be what it is not and cannot reasonably hope to be. Each must find the task it can do best and then do it. Therein lies our salvation educationally.

Virgil M. Hancher
The State University of Iowa

The report of the President's Commission on Higher Education will have justified itself if it does no more than evoke such critical and thoughtful appraisal and debate as are exemplified in the papers of President Taylor and President Chalmers in the Autumn, 1948, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

I venture brief comment on only one aspect of the two papers.

It is not to evade or to settle fundamental issues to say that American democracy does not have to choose between quality and quantity; between selectivity and inclusive-

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ness; between intensification and broadening. It can, in each instance, if it so wills—not easily, but surely—have both. This seems to me to be the best answer to those who, like Mr. Chalmers, see in proposals to extend educational opportunity "the apotheosis of mediocrity" and a threat to "high standards."

It should be possible for the American people, if they so choose, to provide for every boy and girl "as good an education as he can be given and as he is capable of receiving"—and without sacrifice of the quality of education provided for those who demonstrate superior intellectual capacity, promise and interest. Extension and improvement of educational opportunity for the many need not and should not mean inferior education for the "best minds." These must be discovered and duly provided for, not for their own sakes alone, but, as Mr. Chalmers rightly insists, for the sake of society. But such provision need not, in turn, imply denial of proper educational opportunity for those of more limited or of different gifts. In the end there should be place for the "community college" with its varied functions and services; for the university with its emphasis upon research and technical and professional scholarship; and for Kenyon College with its admirable emphasis upon selectivity and upon "the central disciplines of the mind."

Goodrich C. White
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The Rise of Fantasy

May I be so bold as to point out two errors in Mr. Harrison Smith's otherwise interesting essay on the rise of fantasy, in your Summer issue. To speak of so notable an English scholar as M. R. James as a "graduate of the pulp magazines" would seem both wrong and insulting—his titles occupy over six columns in the printed catalogue of the Library of Congress, and his pulp appearances, if any, are in the form of reprints.

In the second place, Lovecraft devotes several paragraphs in the expanded form of his essay on the supernatural in literature to the work of William Hope Hodgson (not Dodgson); this can be found in its separate appearance in book form published by the Argus Book Shop, or in Arkham House's first Lovecraft collection, *The Outsider.*

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Summer, 1948, Editorial

In his editorial, "The Faith We Do Not Trust," of your Summer number, Mr. Walton Hamilton shows that he himself is a victim of the disease of which he complains. He says that in government, we act before we investigate and think. As proof, he writes: "The RFC, by granting or denying loans, shapes the pattern of our national economy; yet it has never exposed to vulgar intellectual scrutiny what lies back of its judgment."

Here are the facts. In the spring of 1947, the House Banking and Currency Committee, under Chairman Jesse Walcott, of Michigan, conducted extensive public hearings on RFC, prepared an excellent report, and drafted new legislation which became the RFC Act of June 30, 1947. At the same time, the Senate Banking and Currency Committee held separate studies of an incomplete nature. On July 16, 1947, the Senate appropriated $50,000 for a "full and complete inquiry into the operations" of RFC. This was made under the direction of a special subcommittee of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee. Senator C. Douglass Buck, of Delaware, a highly intelligent and devoted public servant, was chairman of that subcommittee. I acted as counsel to it and executive director of the inquiry, which began October 1, 1947, and continued to March 10, 1948. The purpose was to study RFC operations and to determine its present and future usefulness. In addition to the excellent work of the House Committee the year before, we had available the truly exhaustive RFC report, in ten volumes, of the General Accounting Office.

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At the start, we sent out a carefully prepared questionnaire to every bank in the nation. Nine thousand replies were received and studied. Another questionnaire was sent to some of the members on each of the RFC advisory committees, which consist of bankers and business men familiar with RFC operations. Public hearings were held, at which bankers, business men, economists, officials of the RFC, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Governor of the Federal Reserve System, and other government officials testified. A report of the investigation was prepared and printed on March 10, 1948, and an extensive amendment of the 1947 Act was introduced in the Senate, following debate in the Special Subcommittee and in the full Senate Banking and Currency Committee. Then the House Banking and Currency Committee considered the Senate report and amendments, held hearings, redrafted the Senate bill, and presented its own amendments to the House. From these, the Senate bill and the House bill went to the Conference Committee, where the differences were debated and a final bill agreed upon, which then was resubmitted to both houses of Congress, and after passage, sent to the President, who signed it on May 25, 1948.

Such is the nature of the normal legislative process. It can be said that every department of the national government which had a knowledge of the RFC was consulted —the General Accounting Office, the Office of the Budget, the FDIC, the Department of Defense, the President's Council of Economic Advisers, to name a few. In addition, representatives of the American Bankers Association were in constant touch with the proceedings.

A similar story of study, research, hearings and debate could be detailed on the Marshall Plan and the resulting ERP legislation.

The point is that Congress does make searching studies of its problems, that the process is far more thorough than most Americans, and especially Mr. Hamilton, realize. The ways of reason are resorted to by Congress; choices are studied; answers do not emerge before issues are laid bare; nor are the decencies denied to stubborn souls who will not go along.

Mr. Hamilton's editorial is of no value, because he has not taken the pains to know the facts.

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Is Our Patent System Obsolete?

Had Professor Hamilton (Autumn, 1948) sought merely to demonstrate that our patent statute is ancient, and therefore in need of thorough revision, one could hardly disagree, for from its insufficiencies has sprung judge-made law probably beyond that found necessary in any other federal statute. But it is a "system" which he attacks.

The objectionable "system," as the article describes it, is the fostering of monopolies by assignments and licenses from inventors to powerful corporations.

Professor Hamilton's thesis seems to stem from what, with all due respect, I regard as an unsound reading of the constitutional clause. A proper evaluation of this clause as given by the courts is to place the emphasis on the "promotion" of science and arts as the objective of the framers; the reward to the inventor is but secondary. The early period was marked not by mass workers but by the produce of the farmer and the product of the individual craftsman. Certainly there was no prevision of the industrial evolution which followed, nor of the dominant scientific era in which we live.

Just as other clauses of the Constitution have yielded to congressional enactments to meet economic conditions without destroying or impairing our capitalistic base, the patent clause should not be denied comparable elasticity.

But in the "system" Professor Hamilton finds lurking monopoly because patents may be assigned or licensed to offending corporations. Well, the Supreme Court has thrown up safeguards which, to be sure,

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UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

Distressed Merchandise

Recently a wine dealer recommended to me as a gift a fine Burgundy of "one of the great years." He sang its praises with the lyric exactitude of the expert, and then astonished me by quoting a fantastically low price.

"Why," I asked, "if this wine is as distinguished as you say, is its price so ordinary—in fact, rather less than ordinary?"

"Oh," he said promptly, "this is distressed merchandise!"

The term was new to me, and he explained it. A shipper or a middleman short of money will unload even some prized wares at a sacrifice, and these notable goods then become classified as distressed merchandise.

The term has pleasantly preoccupied my reflections from time to time ever since. As I read the weekly reviews, the little reviews, and the little pamphlets of ideas expanded into books, the epithet "distressed merchandise" seems to me a convenient and transferable one. There is evidence that there are authors and thinkers who have hastily sold out good ideas, often sloppily packaged under the pressures of time, and occasionally even under the pressures of money.

In the current scene of political action and political morals, there are instances of distressed merchandise too—high ideals that have been auctioned off cheap; principles that have been sold for a song; political moralities of the first water that have been got rid of over the counter. Some dedication that came to maturity in a "great year" is exchanged for a quick expediency in a poor one.

But sometimes the current intellectual merchandise is distressed in another sense, and distressing as well. How much we are hearing these days about "anxiety"—as if it were almost a desirable principle of the actions or of the corruption of man, as if it were something to cling to—and the "absurd," as if it were the central fact of existence. The bookshops, too, are full of unhappy commodities. But they differ from the wares recommended by my wine dealer. They do not come from the sunny side of the hill; they are not of a great year, nor do they grow cheap.

Aristides the Sensible

As schoolboys we all learned about Aristides the Just. He was so celebrated for his justice that his very name became tiresome as well as suspicious. It is hard to know whether he was more resented for being just, or more suspected for being thought to be. There is a different kind of Aristides whom surely I am not the only one to find oppressive—Aristides the Sensible.

I have never met him actually, but I have friends who are constantly speaking of him. He is invariably sensible, equable, reasonable, sane. He is subject to no excess of passion or prejudice; there is no "if," as in Kipling, about his keeping his head when all about him are losing theirs. In the midst of crises, his own or those of the world, he maintains an exquisite calmness and admirable serenity.

Let some wild wind of political doctrine sweep across the country: he remains steadfast. Let some mode of philosophical excess or literary exaggeration become current: with quiet good sense, he estimates it exactly, and with courtesy and reserve sees through it and sees around it. When pessimists foresee the organized self-extinction of the human race by atomic energy, he reminds one of long perspectives and of astronomical vistas. When enthusiasts see some imminent Utopia, he always inserts a realistic reminder of the actual and the limits of the possible.

I know it should be exhilarating even to hear about such a calm paragon of good

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sense, but the more I hear of Aristides the Sensible, the more I find him impossible. If only he would go mildly mad occasionally, or once burst into nonsense. If only once I could hear that he had lapsed into hysteria, or displayed even the slightest eccentricity. It stands to reason that one should admire a thoroughly reasonable man, but even hearing about him raises my blood pressure. His mere existence is a smug and invidious comment on the rest of us. If I ever meet him, and my friends are always promising to introduce us, I shall be tempted to revise the old English verse and say to him:

I do not like you, Dr. Fell.
The reason is not hard to tell:
You practice reason far too well.
I do not like you, Dr. Fell.

Dance without Music

The theory of business cycles seems fairly well established in economics, but there are cycles too in the business of the arts. There was the announcement just the other day of a ballet without music where, the director announced, the participants were trained to dance not by the beating of time heard but by the geometry of design seen. Dialectically, even practically, it is possible, I suppose, to distinguish choreography from the music which accompanies it. But one's tastes harden, like one's arteries, and for myself a ballet with music seems to me more attractive than one without it.

Nonetheless, it is a temptation to let the mind roam over analogous possibilities. I would enjoy an exhibition of painting not only without subject matter but without color and without composition. Come to think of it, I have sometimes run across such things, though they are not announced as such. It would be extraordinarily interesting to go to a concert where the music had no chords, no melody and no rhythm, or to read poetry without euphony, without meter, without image. Sometimes I think these singular pleasures have been afforded me of late in the galleries, bookshops and museums.

All this I know is perverse or unfair. The pictorial design of the dance, I do not need to be informed, is distinct from that of the musical accompaniment. But just the same, how nice it is to loll back into the comfortable convention of ballet with music, of painting with line and color, of poetry with melody, rhythm and image. There are moments when one enjoys seeing what can be "done without" in a given art. But such astringent and heroic explorations are on the whole less fun than they might be. I look forward sometime—say, next week—to going to an old-fashioned—shall we say, horse-and-buggy—ballet, that uses the cumbrous and (I doubt not) gratuitous apparatus of lovely sound, in addition to the loveliness of bodies in motion. It is sheer aesthetic laziness, I know, but then one does not turn to the arts primarily to see how much one can do without. There are other opportunities for such austerities and asceticisms.

On Counting Worlds

A few years ago—and how long it seems—the phrase "one world" was on everybody's tongue, and the hope of one world was in everybody's heart. Now, more soberly and ominously, the phrase has become two worlds. We are told not without evidence that they are irreconcilable, and the possibility of the world becoming one has been declared for the long tragic present an irrelevant dream.

If the whirling planet could speak, it might quietly remind those crawling about its surface or flying above it that it really is still one world which (as Gilbert reminded us in the "Bab Ballads") rolls on.

But if some impatient reader reminds me that of course by one world is meant not the physical planet but the human scene, and that that human scene is now, we are credibly informed, two worlds, then two worlds are almost as much of a mess as one. There are of course numberless worlds, often very small ones, that hardly have a speaking acquaintance with each other. Five minutes across the park from Columbia University is a teeming world of Negro Harlem. Ten minutes away are Spanish-speaking slums. Two minutes away from

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Philosophy Hall is a building devoted to Law, and another to Business. Pluriverse, as James once said, would be a better name for what we live in.

It would be fine if we could have one world. Or would it? In too many senses, we are already having it. Airplanes transport us with the utmost rapidity to distant places that are becoming so much like home that we might just as well have stayed home. International radio networks can mutually broadcast recognizable mediocrity if the world really becomes one. In the sense of a vast undifferentiated standard of dullness, we might be glad to abandon the phrase and the idea altogether. Perhaps what we really mean is simply the fact recognized long ago by the ancient Stoics—that we are, in the possibility of reason and in the identity of our fate, brothers. Perhaps what we really want is a universal chance for as many worlds as possible. One world, even two worlds, is really a very small number. It does not need astronomers to remind us how many worlds there are, including these desiring or dreaming ones within all of us into which, in dream and in wish, we retire.

One Less Bother

"I am quite sure you would not be interested in it at all," said a friend, speaking of a novel about which I had expressed some curiosity. "It's no good at all, and it is not the kind of book in which you would in any case have the least pleasure."

I respected my friend's judgment of writing, and I knew he was very accurate in divining my tastes. "Well, then, that's that," I said to myself. "One less book to promise myself to read."

I have a perverse pleasure, that must be shared by many—the delight of release from the additional obligations imposed by announced new masterpieces, paintings that one must see, music that one must hear, novels that one must read, plays that one must attend, conferences that one must take part in. I make rather a cult of reading the daily reviews of books and plays and music, and checking off with delight those that begin in effect: "One wonders what on earth prompted anyone to write or to publish . . ." or "Why Conductor X selected this current Italian bit of musical chaos is not clear . . ." or "There must doubtless be some who are moved by this tawdry and dull melodrama produced last night." I bless the writers of such devastating pronouncements. They have given me an alibi for reading old books (since there are clearly no good new ones), or chatting with friends, or doing nothing at all, or writing something like this.

Back from Nature

Only the city bred could possibly feel that after a spell in the country they were returning to life by returning to town. But autumn after autumn there must be thousands who feel, as I do, that it may be all very well about trees and grass and wind and rain, but it's very comforting to get back from the nuisance of fires to steam heat, from fields and streams to streets and busses. Time and again there have been back-to-nature movements—in life, in literature and in art. But the revolts that are not least interesting are those away from nature —to formalism in art, to urbanization and urbanity in life, to the sophisticated in manners, to the disciplined in action, from the spontaneities of progressive education, freedom once more shuddering into rules. I suspect we're in the midst of one of these back-from-nature movements now. The words discipline and order rear their formal looking heads. Even the farm imitates and embodies the streamlining of cities. Some have gone so far back from nature that they are in the realm of Non-Being, itself. In a world where there is, as atomic scientists assure us, no place to hide, Non-Being would seem a good place to get back to. I expect shortly a Back-to-Nothingness movement (about as far from Nature as one could get), quietude and peace at last!

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The Revolving Bookstand

Science and Its History

Marshall Clagett

On Understanding Science, An Historical Approach, by J. B. Conant. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1947. 146 pp. $2.00

Science, Servant of Man, by I. B. Cohen. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 1948. 362 pp. $4.00

The Magic of Numbers, by E. T. Bell. New York, London: Whittlesey House. 1946. 418 pp. $3.50

A Source Book in Greek Science, by M. R. Cohen and I. E. Drabkin. New York, London, Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Company. 1948. 579 pp. $9.00

Sun, Stand Thou Still, The Life and Works of Copernicus, by A. Armitage. New York: Henry Schuman. 1947. 205 pp. $3.50

Introduction to the History of Science, vol. III (in two parts), *Science and Learning in the Fourteenth Century* (part 1), by G. Sarton. Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins Company. 1947. 2,155 pp. $20.00

The history of science as an independent discipline can hardly be said to have come of age. We can still count on the fingers of one hand the institutions in this country which are devoting serious study to it. But through the efforts of George Sarton of Harvard University, of Lynn Thorndike of Columbia University, and of a number of other individuals, working in many cases outside of and beyond the curricula of their universities, the influence of the historical approach to science has become increasingly evident in the last few years. In this essay I am primarily interested in recent efforts to employ the historical approach in popular or semi-popular science books.

Widespread attention was drawn to the use of the historical method as a guide to the understanding of science by the appearance last year of President James B. Conant's *On Understanding Science*, the publication of his Terry Lectures delivered at Yale University in 1946. It is President Conant's contention in this volume that the layman can best understand the nature of science and the way scientists work by examining in some detail a limited number of historical cases. He recommends earlier cases because the non-specialist presumably can master with ease their simpler scientific principles. At the same time he can learn from them the more enduring characteristics of scientific method.

In discussing what he continually refers to as the "tactics and strategy of science," Conant indicates that the case studies reveal as the most important characteristic of scientific progress and development the intimate relationship between concept and experiment. New concepts are born of experiment and observation, and in turn are fruitful of new experiments and observations. The success of his method is somewhat limited by the restricted number of cases under consideration—which prevents the reader from obtaining and understanding of the great variety of method in scientific enterprises. Furthermore, the reader has little chance to realize the importance of mathematics and logical principles in the formation of scientific theory.

In the preface to his book, President Conant expresses his indebtedness to I. Bernard Cohen, instructor in the history of science and general education at Harvard, for gathering material used in his case histories. More recently, Dr. Cohen has employed the case history method in his own

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able *Science, Servant of Man*, to illustrate the fruitful relationship between fundamental and applied science.

At the outset Cohen is particularly interested in illustrating the conditions of scientific discovery. The type of discovery which is often called "the happy accident" is properly related to what Cohen designates as the "total scientific situation" at the time of the discovery. The basic assumption is that a discovery must fit the times, at least for fruitful exploitation. As one of the cases cited to show how a discovery which does not "fit the times" may lie fallow until the total scientific situation is more apt, Dr. Cohen describes in detail the history of the discovery and use of penicillin. Initially discovered in 1928-29 by Alexander Fleming, who expressed his faith in its therapeutic possibilities, penicillin lay neglected for a decade until confidence in chemotherapy and allied methods of treatment became more general.

From the preliminary chapters on the nature of scientific discovery, Cohen proceeds to his main task, to show, by the use of case histories, the important relationship between fundamental research and practical applications. The case histories are admirably selected with an eye to their dramatic potentialities, and they are narrated with a nice appreciation for the background of the non-technical reader, yet without sacrifice of accuracy.

In the final section, Cohen draws conclusions in terms of the case histories described. These case histories are primarily illustrative rather than demonstrative in character. Cohen concludes with a brief discussion of the planning of scientific activities on three levels: the spread and use of practical applications, the discovery and initial development of practical applications, and the development of fundamental research. Supporting and stressing the importance of planning on the first two levels, he is most skeptical of the possibilities of detailed planning in fundamental research. But Cohen does not draw the conclusion (as some of his reviewers have implied) that because basic research ought not to be directed in detail, some kind of government support would not be useful. He recommends national support for research in areas of fundamental knowledge where the United States is obviously deficient.

In view of his constantly reiterated distinction between fundamental and applied science, and of his skepticism toward the planning of fundamental research, it is little wonder that Cohen's book should have drawn sharp criticism from those who would interpret the development of science along Marxist or historical materialist lines. We are told constantly by this latter group that any basic distinction between pure and applied science is naïve, for the historical evidence reveals that theory, and hence what is called "pure" science, is rooted in practice. As one of the proponents of this view has declared: "The sciences in the particular sense of the word [pure science] are not 'pure,' since the *selection of an object* is determined by aims which are practical in the long run—and this, in its turn, can and must be considered from the standpoint of the casual *regularity* of social development." (Bukharin)

This line of thinking is generally followed by the very able British archeologist Gordon Childe in such works as *Man Makes Himself* and *What Happened in History*, as well as by Benjamin Farrington in his sundry works on Greek science, including *Science and Politics in the Ancient World* and *Greek Science, Its Meaning for Us*. These works have not been without value and importance, directing us as they have to examine intellectual development in relationship to social thought and activity. But the generalization seems inevitably to outrun the evidence. From those who always enter the same house by the same door, the descriptions of the interior must ever be identical. Thus Farrington assures us that Greek science was born in Ionia in the fruitful union of theory and practice, and that by the fourth century B. C. the progress of a slave-based society was such that already Plato, and to a lesser extent Aristotle, reflected the separation of theory and practice and thus sounded the death knell of Greek science. It should be pointed out that, slave-based or not, the

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society of the succeeding centuries produced the great flowering of Greek science in the brilliant and deathless works of Euclid, Archimedes, Aristarchus, Apollonius of Perga, Eratosthenes and Hipparchus. And whatever the reasons for the decline of Hellenistic society, much more evidence than has been previously advanced will be necessary to show that slavery was an important factor in the decline of Greek science.

Presenting the same view of the historical development of science as Childe and Farrington, J. G. Crowther, in the first half of his *Social Relations of Science*, traces the development of modern science out of practical social needs. Lacking the basic respect for historical evidence shown in the works of Childe and Farrington, this book continually does violence to history. Crowther's condemnation of scientists of the last three centuries for "piling up discoveries in regions artificially isolated from the general body of knowledge and social welfare" shows, in my opinion, a profound misunderstanding of the history of science and the relation of seemingly useless fundamental knowledge to later spectacular, practical applications.

But to return to the books at hand. E. T. Bell's *The Magic of Numbers* is directed at the non-specialist, but it is essentially of a different character from the works of Cohen and Conant. Written by one of our foremost American mathematicians, it professes to be an historical treatment of the course of Pythagorean-Platonic number theory with its essential belief in the ultimate reality and universality of number independent of the senses. Its author views with what I judge to be alarm the recrudescence in modern mathematics and physics of something of the same type of thinking, particularly in the work of Milne and Dirac. Thus Milne on one occasion has asserted: "It is in fact possible to *derive* the laws of dynamics rationally . . . without recourse to experience."

The general objective of this work is a good one, and I assume Bell's judgments on modern mathematics are sound. Yet three-fourths of the book treats of the an-

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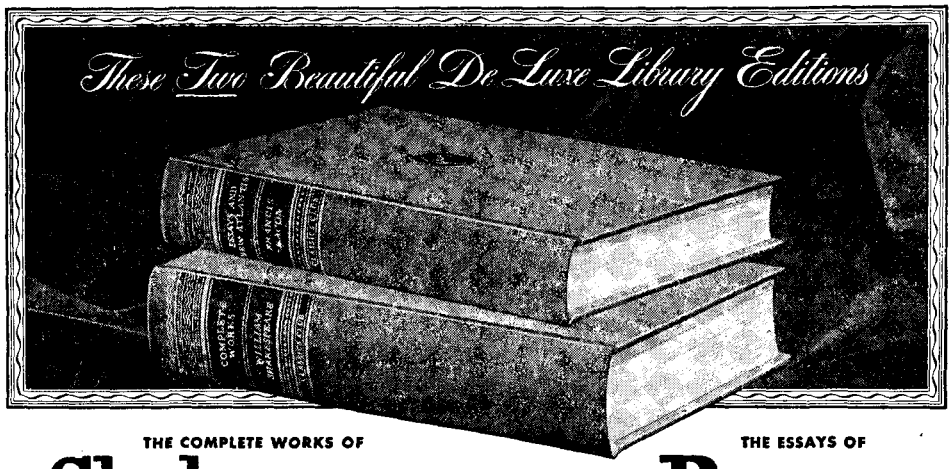

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cient and medieval periods, and the author does not appear to be at home in recent classical and medieval scholarship. Outmoded generalities are all too evident. The placing of Ptolemy in the first century A.D., I assume to be a slip. The idea of Roger Bacon towering as a lone beacon light in medieval science is scarcely worthy of further refutation. We need only mention in his own century the figures of Peter the Stranger, Witelo, Peckham, Jordanus, and Dietrich of Freiberg—all of whom were at least Bacon's equals in science, and most of whom were his superiors. And the statement concerning Bacon's treatment of the rainbow (his "tampering with the rainbow alone would have been enough to condemn any man in the thirteenth century to something even less pleasant than imprisonment for life") is just plain nonsense. A host of writers on optics in the thirteenth century dealt with the rainbow, and Dietrich of Freiberg's theory (supported by experiments with glass balls filled with water to simulate raindrops) was much superior to the discussion by Bacon. In short, concerning this book—*caveat lector.*

A Source Book in Greek Science by the late Morris Cohen and I. E. Drabkin, written as an introductory volume in McGraw-Hill's series, "Source Books in the History of the Sciences," was obviously designed as a textbook, but is really very much more. It should appeal to the general reader interested in ancient thought. And it certainly serves to counterbalance the tendentious approach of the works of Farrington already noted. At the same time, it will give the reader many concrete examples to reveal the half-true or erroneous nature of Mr. Bell's generalizations. Thus the passages included from a sixth century commentary of Joannes Philoponus, a Christian-Aristotelian commentator in the Neoplatonic tradition so disdainfully dismissed by Bell, demand respect as sound and very telling criticisms of Aristotle's physics. Philoponus particularly notes that experiment shows better than reason that bodies of different weights do not fall in times inversely proportional to their weights (as the Aristotelian law of movement would indicate) but

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rather that they fall in approximately equal times. The experiment of dropping weights is usually credited to Stevin or Galileo.

The book's explanatory notes, introductions, diagrams and bibliographies are excellent. While many standard translations are included, there is a surprising amount of new material not hitherto translated into English. It gives by far the best picture of Greek science of any single volume I know.

While the works of Conant and I. B. Cohen utilize the history of science as an end to scientific exposition, a new series known as "The Life of Science Library" (now being published by Henry Schuman) treats the history of science in its own right. This library has as its primary objective the presentation of the lives and achievements of scientists, and the development of important aspects of science in general, or of one of the individual sciences. Authored by specialists, this series is directed at readers without special training in the sciences or the history of science. Two volumes of this series have appeared to date, A. Armitage's *Sun, Stand Thou Still* and George Sarton's *The Life of Science*. I have not yet had the opportunity of examining the Sarton volume, a re-editing of some of his earlier essays.

The Armitage volume has the merit of presenting Copernicus' contributions to astronomy as a part of the continuing history of astronomy. After devoting earlier chapters to astronomy in antiquity and the middle ages, Armitage describes Copernicus' life and works, and then concludes with chapters on the gradual acceptance and elaboration of Copernicus' ideas in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—epitomizing the work of Kepler, Galileo, Descartes and Newton. In his efforts to simplify the material, Armitage tends, I think, to underrate his reader; this results in the loss of much of the meat of his subject matter. His introductory chapters on ancient and medieval astronomy (including the transition to the Renaissance) are the least satisfactory. For example, the new tendencies of the fifteenth century which Armitage seems to ascribe to Regiomontanus clearly grew out of the

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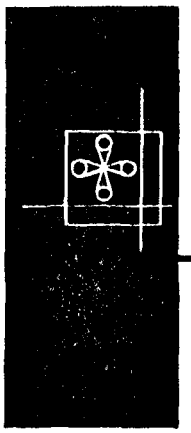

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development of observational astronomy at the end of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century, particularly at Paris, as the French historian of physics and astronomy, Pierre Duhem, showed a generation ago.

The appearance of the third volume of George Sarton's "Introduction to the History of Science" I shall note only briefly, since it is largely a work of reference for specialists. Yet I must call the general reader's attention to the lengthy summary introductions in each part. The first of these details all aspects of science and learning in the first half of the fourteenth century, and the second completes the survey for the last half of the century. These introductory sections alone would make an independent volume of 700 pages. As in the previous volumes, attention is given to Eastern and Western learning alike, and the broadest possible interpretation is given to science. This volume (in two separate parts) completes the work Sarton began prior to the First World War. It now stands as the standard work in the history of science and learning from the sixth century B. C. to the fourteenth century A. D. As the founder and editor of *Isis* and the author of this magistral "Introduction to the History of Science" and numerous other books and articles in the history of science, George Sarton occupies a unique position in the development and encouragement of the history of science.

I have little doubt that as Sarton and other specialists continue their activity, and as more universities adopt courses in the history of science or courses in general science utilizing historical method, we shall see an increasing number of popular scientific expositions influenced by this activity.

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THE READER REPLIES

(*Continued from page 232*)

though not found in the patent statute, are derived from the broad equity power of the courts. Now no one—inventor, licensee or assignee—who reaches beyond the frontier of his lawful monopoly grant, can secure relief against infringers.

Nor should Professor Hamilton be too much concerned lest the reward to the inventor be not commensurate with his contribution. It is difficult to see how, without substantial financial backing, an individual inventor could effect commercial success in fields which require enormous sums for research. Not to recognize such existing conditions is to close one's mind to actuality. Are inventions in industrial adaptations of atomic energy, radar, cyclotronics and ultrafax not to be protected by patents, because such patents may and probably will be controlled by corporate interests? The age of the garret inventor is over; and, despite the functions of the governmental Office of Scientific Research and Development, research laboratories of private interests are necessary for chemical, electronic and other forms of industrial development. To say that corporations which maintain such research laboratories under appropriations which run to enormous annual outlays are not to profit thereby over competitors who make no such investments would be not to promote progress but to stifle it.

No, granted that the patent statute needs drastic revision, it by no means follows that a system which has contributed heavily to the material welfare of our people is obsolete.

Clarence G. Galston
United States District Court
Eastern District of N.Y., Brooklyn

Referring to the Hamilton-Ooms FORUM articles, let us assume that inventors must be rewarded by the government. It was then still possible for the Fathers to argue as to the nature of the reward. Should it be a medal or a title of nobility or cash or a little private monopoly?

They chose the monopoly—a grant of

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control over a bit of industry. Such a grant can be turned into cash by collecting a little sales tax, or by outright sale of the patent to a corporation which collects such little monopolies into larger monopolies and larger control of industry. They apparently did not foresee the effect such control would have on the progress of industry, nor its other effects.

Arnold Romberg
406 East 32 Street
Austin, Texas

World Federation

If your columns are still open for this discussion I should like to add a word to emphasize and extend the point made in your Autumn, 1948, issue by Mr. Abraham under the heading, "Jurisdiction—Not Federation." The public peace, within a nation or internationally, can properly and successfully be maintained only by confining the use of force to the execution of justice duly —that is, judicially—administered. But justice can practicably be executed by measures "short of war" (police measures) only against individuals, not against organized recalcitrant communities; and so the international court's compulsory jurisdiction must be extended to individuals and to such lawsuits by, against and between individuals as involve international rights and obligations. It needs also to be an appellate and not simply an original (first instance) jurisdiction. That does mean making the international court a court of final appeal from the courts of every nation that belongs to the international government, for cases turning on international questions.

Beyond question, if that could be done it would be the most useful and promising first step that could be taken in the direction of international government. It seems to me a mistake to try at this time to formulate any comprehensive, complete World Constitution, as Mr. Robert Hutchins and his associates have been doing. That merely gives the enemies of the whole idea more targets to shoot at! Begin rather with a simple international administration of justice. Short experience with that would soon bring home to us the pitiful incompleteness

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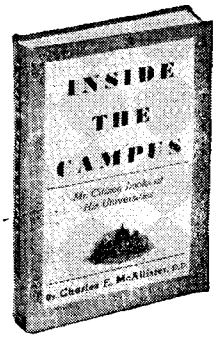

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and inadequacy of the present body of international law; and that might lead to the institution of some machinery for effective international legislation—and even earlier than that, to the construction of some adequate international police force. But legal scholars know that law, historically, has begun in court: the "substantive law" has grown out of the "adjective law," and legislation has developed as a supplement to judicial decision and administration.

G. W. C. Ross
College of St. Thomas
St. Paul 1, Minnesota

Truth and Consequences: Kinsey's Version

The reviews and offshoots of the Kinsey Report arouse in me a mild amusement. So often they express wide-eyed amazement at the epoch-making discoveries of Dr. Kinsey. They remind me of a radio announcer I heard recently on a farm program. He reported that as a result of "profound studies" a certain college of agriculture had learned that in an "ambient temperature" of 95 degrees chickens drink more water than when the temperature is 70 degrees. The Kinsey Report's discoveries may not be exactly common knowledge, but I suspect that Petronius and Rabelais knew as much about the "human male," except for the statistics. When the announced report on the "human female" appears I may buy a copy. Very likely there will be news in it.

What irritates me in the reviews is their negative attitude. With deep sapience the learned writers declare that in the light of these (new) facts the sex mores of the Anglo-Saxon, if not of the world, must be overhauled. Something must be done. But they don't tell us what will be done, or even what they recommend should be done. Should the Anglo-Saxon practice trial marriage with Ben Lindsay, or polygamy with the Mormons, or polyandry with the Nairs? Should we adopt the Moslem system of four wives plus numerous concubines? Should we revert to promiscuous copulation like the beasts of the fields?

If there are definite changes in the marriage and divorce laws to which the Kinsey Report points, let us work for them, once we know what they are. Myself, I don't anticipate an overturn in the behavior of the human male. The race will struggle along toward monogamy as an ideal, with many a stumble by the way. Lechers will continue to chase skirts, happily married couples (there are a few) will continue to grow old together in increasing affection and unity; and the majority of mankind will be somewhere in between.

S. G. Morley
2635 Etna Street
Berkeley, California

On Sidney Hook's Letter

Sidney Hook is a competent philosopher. He polishes off Howard Selsam in a letter (Autumn, 1948) that observes the amenities of a column by Westbrook Pegler and makes use of dangling implications worthy of a press release from Parnell Thomas. For Sidney Hook is a competent philosopher; so are they all, all competent philosophers. I come to bury Selsam, not to praise him.

Why does the butcher's cleaver wielded by Hook, called "methods of scientific inquiry," look so much like the great axe, "theological authority," that used to stand ready to hand of competent philosophers everywhere?

Sidney Hook is a competent philosopher; yet he speaks of non-philosophers. (That's an ill phrase, a vild phrase; "non-philosophers" is a vild phrase.) Has he the wit to understand that William Butler Yeats is not a non-philosopher? If so, Hook and Selsam together could go to school to Yeats when Yeats says of Shakespeare that Shakespeare "saw indeed, as I think, in Richard II the defeat that awaits all, whether they be Artist or Saint, who find themselves where men ask of them a rough energy and have nothing to give but some contemplative virtue, whether lyrical phantasy, or sweetness of temper, or dreamy dignity, or love of God, or love of his creatures. He saw that such a man through sheer bewilderment and impatience can become as unjust or as violent as any common man, any

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Bolingbroke or Prince John, and yet remain 'that sweet lovely rose.'"

This quarrel over the bones of Marx deserves to be entered by some thinker who knows how to bring to bear leading principles derivable from Tocqueville, Max Weber, and Charles Sanders Peirce. Such a fellow, when he has matched his rackets to these balls, will play a set shall strike Hook's competence into the hazard.

Samuel Howard Titus
584 Lincoln Place
Brooklyn 16, N. Y.

Mass Media and the Engineering of Consent

The Joseph T. Klapper article appearing in the Autumn, 1948, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR contributes the important observation that mass media as a means of propaganda by business consists largely of a reaffirmation of the existent mores rather than outright propaganda for a specific point of view. However, to omit the power structure and manipulations behind this common response to a common stimulus is to oversimplify the relationship and underestimate the extent of manipulation.

A great deal of such engineering is more real than apparent, but operates in a manner which is far from being haphazard or impromptu. Operating through trade and business associations (with the aid of such research groups as Opinion Research Corporation, the advice and cooperation of advertising agencies, and the active participation of media), the field of so-called public relations advertising is a case example of the type of united front action in the field of public communication which is both "conscious and Gestalt," "outright and intentional."

Another point in Mr. Klapper's article would seem to need clarification: the relationship between the communication content and the "need to please the largest possible audience." This relationship is complicated by at least two factors. First, we have no accurate means of measuring what the majority wants or feels, so that often communication content is not so much

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"hewing to majority opinion" as hewing to what the sponsor *thinks* majority opinion is. Second, there is no accurate information concerning the relationship between communication on the one hand and public demand on the other. Are the media adhering to the existent mores or are they in actuality setting the mores at the level to which they purport to respond?

Richard Stephenson
New Jersey College for Women
Rutgers University

P.S. Word limitations prohibit a documentation of the organization of institutional advertising as outlined. Complete documentation will be furnished upon request.

R. S.

American Pride and Power

I agreed with every word of Reinhold Niebuhr's editorial, "American Pride and Power" (Autumn, 1948); but it seems to me to need an additional statement of particular importance in the present international situation. The "American Way of Life" does no doubt to most minds connote the "free enterprise" system, and our conceit in treating this slippery concept as an absolute deserves Dr. Niebuhr's strictures. But we are doing the world of our day an equal disservice by our exclusive pride in our peculiar political system.

Unfortunately, most of the nations that have attempted a parliamentary system like that of Britain or the United States have made a sorry mess of it. About the only exceptions are the Scandinavian countries, Belgium and the Netherlands. Highly civilized peoples such as the French and the Italians have never learned the secret or acquired the practical skill of stable parliamentary organization, and the more immature or unruly nations of Eastern Europe and South and Central America are still further from the goal; as for the ancient civilizations of Asia, it may be said that our political terms are not even in their vocabulary.

The trouble with all these nations which have reeled from crisis to crisis is that they have never mastered the technique of representative government, the secret of which is expressed in characteristic British terms as "His Majesty's loyal opposition." The cure for this disease is surely not an indiscriminate attempt to reproduce our parliamentary system everywhere. Having succeeded measurably in our peculiar and frankly hazardous experiment, we must be prepared to permit other nations, differing from us in background and tradition, to make their own hazardous experiments on the way to their own brand of popular government. To that end we shall need to banish pride and fear, remembering that "pride goeth before destruction," and that fear is the most stupid and the most cruel of emotions.

John S. Nollen
916 Seventh Avenue
Grinnell, Iowa

The Poetry of Dylan Thomas

One must admire the heroic attempt of Professor Tindall to interpret the Freudian poetry(?) of Dylan Thomas in the Autumn, 1948, AMERICAN SCHOLAR. With no disrespect to the learned professor I submit a paraphrase of the selection he quotes and interprets. I have read all of Freud's major writtings and know how symbols, fantasies and all sorts of incoherencies are utilized for psychological purposes. If Thomas wishes to intrigue the public by exploiting Freudian ideas, that is his prerogative—but the contention here is that he should not sail under false colors; at the least he should call his brain-child verse, not poetry. Here is the quotation from Thomas' *Selected Writings:*

These boys of light are curdlers in their folly,
Sour the boiling honey;
The jacks of frost they finger in the hives;
There in the sun the frigid threads
Of doubt and dark they feed their nerves;
The signal moon is zero in their voids.

We are the dark deniers, let us summon
Death from a summer woman,
A muscling life from lovers in their cramp,
From the fair dead who flush the sea
The bright-eyed worm on Davy's lamp,
And from the planted womb the man of straw.

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Professor Tindall says of the selection: "There is a mad intensity about it that is deeply moving." To the writer, a lover of the beautiful in poetry and a virile resenter of the psychologist who would prostitute poetry for the sake of enigmatic Freudianism, the quotation from Thomas seems a bit of esoteric Freudian symbolism that the Viennese master himself might have had to puzzle over before offering an interpretation.

Here is the paraphrase. Be honest with yourself, reader. Aside from one of Thomas' lines that is clear and admirably phrased, can you find more or less unintelligibility in one than in the other?

These girls of darkness are girdleless in their folly,
Acid the bubbling molasses;
The jills of ice they finger in the pan:
There in the dark the melting fiber
Of faith and light they stuff their sinews:
The token sun is so-so in their voids.

We are the light affirmers, let us summon
Birth from an autumn maiden,
A gurgling death from haters in their cramp,
"From the fair dead who flush the sea"
The goggled wiggler phosphorescent,
And from the seeded uterus homunculus.

I am wondering if Thomas ever wrote with tongue in cheek?

L. L. Rice
Ware Neck, Virginia

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"Among Pownall's various works none has greater interest for the present-day student in the field of either American colonial history or American historical geography than the Topographical Description."

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Lehigh University

THE first edition of this book was published in London in 1776 to further the cause of the Grand Ohio Company, a land speculation by British and American colonials. It has long been a very rare volume and much sought after by scholars and collectors of Americana.

This edition, a hitherto unpublished edition, edited by Lois Mulkearn of the Darlington Library, University of Pittsburgh, was prepared for publication in 1784 by Thomas Pownall himself.

The editor's notes are intended to make Pownall's work more intelligible to the modern reader; they identify proper names, names of places, topographic features, and events, familiar to the reader in Pownall's time, but often unfamiliar or even unknown today. Since Pownall's work is chiefly topographical, the annotations, for the most part, are limited to identifying (according to present and past location) forts, Indian towns, early settlements, and theaters of activity during the French and Indian War. Explanations of historical matters are given only when they are judged necessary to explain Pownall more fully.

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